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WATCH-HILL BAY.

BY H. W. STILLMAN.

The sun is high
Within the sky,
'Tis noontide on the bay;
The surf's dull roar
On Watch-Hill shore
Seems oh, so far away!
The palest hue
Of lovely blue
Pervades the summer sky,
Where fleecy clouds
Like ships' white shrouds
Sail onward silently.
More darkly blue
But fair to view
Lie bay and sea below,
Where coal sails
Borne by soft gales
Speed lightly to and fro.
Our waiting boat
Idly afloat
Rocks gently on the tide
Beside the pier,
And we can hear
The water lap her side,
While dreamily
We gaze away
Across the bay so wide,
Where Stonington
Sleeps in the sun
Nor wakens from her drowse,
Where Oubrook green
And fair is seen
Waving her forest boughs,
Or northward still
O'er vale and hill
Toward busy Westerly.
Hark! now we hear
Notes soft and clear
Of song-birds merrily
Disporting o'er
The grassy shore
And singing joyously.
See! in the wave
Their pinions they lave,
Then wing their rapid flight
O'er meadows fair,
Through viewless air
Receding from our sight.
Thus musingly
We gaze away
Across the waters wide,
Toward yonder shore
While leaning o'er
Our sailboat's painted side;
Dreaming away
Our holiday
Beneath our loose-hung sail,
Like awning spread
Above our head
While noontide heats prevail.
Our waiting boat
Idly afloat
Rocks gently by the pier;
The surf's dull roar
On Watch-Hill shore
Comes faintly to the ear.
Oh, summer noon
Vanished too soon!
'Tis joy to while away
Your moments fleet
In musings sweet,
Floating on Watch-Hill bay.

THE HEIR OF GLENDALE;

OR, THE

Jewel with the Serpent Setting.

BY FRANK CARROLL,

AUTHOR OF "JOHN PASSMORE'S PLOT," ETC., ETC.

THE DETECTIVES EXAMINING THE MARKS ON THE RIVER SHORE.

CHAPTER V.

THE FRAGMENT OF A WILL.

It was with an expression of unbounded astonishment that Merivale beheld his jewel, extended accusingly toward him by the housekeeper. He was too deeply lost in surprise to mark the suspicion manifested on their faces; or to notice Marie, as she sat in a cowering position, her face hidden.

The form of the murdered man himself failed to attract his attention. The flashing facets of the diamond were all that he had eyes for in that moment of supreme wonder.

He had not worn it since returning from the Park, a week before, but had left it, as he supposed, safely laid away in a private cabinet. By what work of magic could it have reached this house and fallen into that woman's fingers?

"Where did you get that?" he asked sharply, advancing into the room, his wet and muddy boots making their full impression upon the carpet.

Marie looked up at this sternly questioning voice. She had not before been aware of his entrance.

"I took it from the grasp of the murdered man there," the woman firmly replied, looking him keenly in the eye. "How it got there it is not for me to say. You best can answer that."

"I have not the most remote conception of it," he replied. "When last I saw it I locked it safely up in a cabinet, of which I have here the key. By what necromancy it fell into your hands is utterly beyond my power to determine."

"Look here, sir," said Louis, advancing. "You are so taken up with that jewel that you are blind to this more terrible sight. Can you gaze unmoved on the face of poor Mr. Ogden, lying here, murdered in cold blood?"

He motioned the women away, and pointed to the corpse which they had partly concealed.

Mr. Merivale gazed intently for a minute upon the bloodless face, a sad expression marking his features as he did so. Marie had risen, and stood leaning upon her chair, her eyes fixed as with fascination upon his countenance.

"And to think that my last words with him were words of anger and scorn!" he said, sorrowfully, speaking more to himself than to any one present.

"You have not ventured to account for the diamond. How do you account for this?" said Louis, thrusting the handkerchief before his eyes. "And the blood on your face, how came that there?"

He started, and gazed with an alarmed glance at the handkerchief. With a quick motion he pressed his hand to his temple. It came away stained with blood. At that instant only had he realized the web of circumstantial evidence that was gathering around him. The possibility of his being suspected had not crossed his mind for a moment, until the tone of the speaker plainly displayed the doubts that existed in his mind.

The confusion of the suspected man was natural under such circumstances, and did not fail to add to the suspicions of those who mentally accused him.

At this instant Marie came forward, took the handkerchief from the hands of the servant, and pushed him aside almost rudely.

"Speak, Robert," she said, looking searchingly into his face. "How do you account for your handkerchief being found here?"

"I must have dropped it," he said, in the same soliloquizing tone.

"Dropped it!" cried the housekeeper loudly. "You were here then?"

"Yes, I was here," he replied, looking firmly into the face of Marie. "I was here and away again before a soul of you had entered the room. I overtook the murderer, had a desperate struggle with him, and bear this mark of evidence of his superior strength. He struck me prostrate by a blow on the temple."

"When and how was this?" asked Marie, approaching him more closely. "It was several minutes before any one dared to approach this room. Were you here in the interval?"

"Let us first seek another apartment," he said, leading the way from the room. "This is too distressing a spectacle for your eyes. Look up the room, Louis. Let nothing be disturbed until an officer can examine it."

They followed him to the stairs, and to a room on the first floor.

"I was in the grounds," he said, "when that terrible cry was made. I was lingering about with the hope of seeing you again. This man can tell you the same, as he saw me there an hour ago. I wanted so badly to see you, and waited till I found there was no longer any hope of your coming out to me. When that scream of murder was made I dashed into the house and into the room, where I saw the fearful vision you have all beheld. I had my handkerchief in my hand, and must then have dropped it. Looking from the window I saw a dark object stealing through the grounds. It was not a minute before I was out of the house again, followed the fugitive to the water's edge, where he had just entered a boat and cast loose the fastening. I leaped upon him, grappled with him, and for a moment gained the advantage. But he was too strong for me. He broke loose, and struck me a blow on the temple, hurling me headlong from the boat. Before I could recover he was far out into the river."

With intense interest they heard this story, various shades of belief expressed in their faces as he proceeded. Marie had evidently given up whatever doubt she might have entertained, and her face beamed with joy at his self-vindication.

"What paper is that you so tightly clasp in your hand?" she asked.

He looked down in surprise at her question, as if unaware that all this time he had held crushed in his hand a torn fragment of paper, which seemed closely written upon.

"Hold, one moment!" cried Louis. "It is not ten minutes since the boat left the shore?"

"Hardly that."

"It is not too late then to pursue. We have a good boat. I will get some men and follow the murderer."

"I fear it will be of no use, as he was lost in the darkness before I left the shore."

"The moon is just rising. We may overtake him," was the reply.

"Go, then. Every effort must be made. I will go in a few moments to the station, and telegraph to the city to put the police on the alert. They may arrest him seeking to land at the wharves."

Without another word, Louis hastily left the room.

"I cannot imagine what this paper is, or how I obtained it," said Merivale, looking curiously at the torn document. "I had nothing of the kind in my hand before that struggle, and it must have somehow fallen into my possession during my fight with the murderer. I may have torn it out of his hands or from his person during the combat."

"What is it?" asked Marie curiously. "It may throw some light on this dreadful circumstance."

The housekeeper stood with a cold, stern visage, regarding him with the eye of an inquisitor. Her suspicions had evidently not been allayed. She still firmly grasped the breastpin, plainly intending to keep it as evidence for the judicial investigation.

"It appears to be part of a will," he said, straightening the wet and torn paper, and attempting to decipher it. "It is signed with the name of James Ogden. Is that his signature?"

"Yes. Read it, Robert. It may contain some important clue to the purpose and identity of the murderer."

"He must have taken it from Mr. Ogden's room. Must have known, in fact, precisely where to find it in the short interval at his command. Its being in his possession looks as if the obtaining it was one of his principal objects. I cannot but think that we have here an important clue."

"Read it. I burn with anxiety to learn its contents."

The others present placed themselves in attitudes of close attention, as he closely examined the wet document, striving to make out its contents.

"I have only the concluding portion of it here," he said. "It has been torn across the paper, and there is a small piece torn from the edge of this fragment. I will read it as well as I can make it out. The water and mud have not helped its legibility."

Approaching the light more closely, he proceeded to read as follows, mentioning the broken and illegible portions as he continued. These breaks in the document we have indicated below by stars.

"* * * In the event * * * * prescribed time, I give, devise and bequeath the above-named real and personal property to my nephew, Henry Ogden, to be his without reservation, except * * * * above-named party * * * * * * * * his identity, * * * * * * executors to hold in trust * * * * rents and interest thereof, but not to sell or otherwise dispose of * * * * * * * * *

"I do hereby constitute and appoint my esteemed friends, William Brown and Horace Johnson * * * Executors of this my last will and testament.

"In witness whereof, I, James Ogden, * * to this my last will, written on one sheet of parchment * * * hand and seal, this fourth day of May, 18—."

This was followed by the signature, which was duly subscribed to by witnesses as having been made in their presence, the names of the witnesses signing being John Wilder and Elwood Burns.

"This is certainly a very important document," he said, carefully folding it up. "There is a mysterious reservation in this bequest to Henry Ogden—but there is nothing left here to show its character, and unless the remainder of the will can be found, the property will revert to him."

"The rents and interest will," said the housekeeper. "It is plain enough that he was forbidden by the will to dispose of any part of the property, and the executors were to hold it in trust for the real heir."

"Very true," he replied, again examining the document. "If the lost words were here, I think it would have that meaning. But unless the remainder of the document is found, it will be impossible to tell who is referred to. This, in its present form, would probably not be considered a legal will. But even without a will, this nephew, being the nearest relative, would inherit the property."

"You may be a little mistaken in that," said the housekeeper. "Mr. Henry Ogden will likely find this document to be a sound one, and that the executors will see that he don't run through the estate. And there may be relatives spring up as near as he is. There is nothing like a doubtful will to bring forth lost relations."

"You do not like this nephew?" asked Mr. Merivale.

"Not at all. He is wild and dissipated, and I know that Mr. Ogden has been displeased at some of his doings which came to his ears."

"Nor do I like him," said Marie. "Why, I hardly know. I have seen but little of him, and that little has not impressed me favorably."

"It is necessary that a detective officer be procured and brought here as soon as possible," said Merivale; "and I fear we are losing important time. I must go to the station immediately and telegraph to the city, and must take the next train down."

"Do not go until Louis has returned," asked Marie, imploringly. "I cannot bear the thought of your leaving us here alone."

As she spoke Mrs. Montague, the housekeeper, left the room, taking with her the breastpin and handkerchief, with the evident intention of keeping them in her own possession until a legal investigation should be instituted.

The servants had previously gone out, and the departure of Mrs. Montague left the two lovers alone together.

They looked into each other's faces for a minute without speaking. Then he said, in a strange tone—

"She suspects me of being concerned in this horrible crime. Are my actions, then, so open to doubt, Marie?"

"Doubt? And of you? No, no; you do her wrong, indeed! She acts from a sense of duty in retaining those articles—but I am sure she is not inimical to you."

"Circumstances look dark against me," he said, gloomily. "Some fatality kept me here until the time of the murder. Some unlucky destiny caused me to drop that handkerchief. Some unaccountable mystery placed my breastpin in the dead man's grasp. The clouds are gathering around me."

"But you have explained all that," she said, in earnest tones. "You have told us your whole action in the matter. Your story is so satisfactory, that there is no danger of its being doubted."

"I have one trusting friend, at any rate," he answered, thinking to himself that Mrs. Montague was a truer representative of the world at large. "There is one point though, which my explanation does not touch. That fatal jewel. I have already told you how ominous it is to all members of my family who allow it to pass from their hands. It has in some unexplained way passed from my possession, and already the fatal consequences are upon me."

"You are desponding without cause, Robert. I have no doubt you will be able to clear up this mystery, to discover in what manner you lost it, and perhaps by this means gain a clue to the murderer. It looks evident to me that the man who robbed you of your jewel, was he who committed this murder—and that in their fatal struggle, it was somehow grasped by my poor guardian."

Robert listened to her words with increasing despondency. She was bringing the very argument to bear against the real murderer, that the world might bring against himself, yet without thinking of its full application.

After some further conversation, in which she continued to express her faith in his innocence, and her confidence in his being able to make it clearly evident to the world, he left her, for the purpose of telegraphing to the police authorities of the city information of the murder, and instructions to place the harbor police on the alert against the probable approach of the murderer's boat. He described this boat and the man himself as clearly as he was able, under the circumstances of his excitement and the darkness of the night. His recollection of these particulars was very vague.

Louis had not returned when he again reached the house. In fact, the last night train had passed before the men who had gone in pursuit of the fugitive returned from their unsuccessful search. The moon had risen and the clouds broken, shortly after their start. But though this rendered the surface of the river visible for a considerable distance, and they had rowed with great speed, they had seen no sign of any other boat afloat upon the surface.

This delay obliged Robert to spend the night at the house. It was a night passed with little slumber on the part of any inmate of the household. The awful presence of death, and death in such a form, in that locked room, was enough to banish slumber from all eyes. The key might be turned upon the corpse, but no lock could confine the horror that permeated the house, causing the wakeful to shudder with dread, the sleeping to dream dreams of fearful aspect. This cheerful country mansion could never again be what it had been hitherto. There was that henceforth associated with it which would throw a shadow upon all its cheer, a cloud upon all its sunshine; at least to all then present.

Among those upon whose eyes fell not the blessed balm of slumber was Marie Dubois. Despite her words to Robert she had felt with deep terror the dangerous position in which he stood, and only a strong effort at repression enabled her to hide her fears from his eyes. In the silent watches of the night they came with redoubled force upon her, bringing in their train a misery of apprehension almost beyond her strength to bear.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EMPTY CABINET.

Robert Merivale took the earliest morning train for Philadelphia. He had, like most of the inmates of the mansion, passed an unrestful night, the strange array of circumstances which had grown up around him disturbing his mind despite his every effort to banish them from his thoughts.

The mystery of the breastpin most annoyed and surprised him. He formed a dozen theories of the manner in which it could possibly have fallen into the dead man's hand, each of which was as quickly rejected as insufficient.

It was principally the desire to search into this mysterious circumstance that impelled him to this early return, though he felt also the importance of sending a skilful detective to the scene of the murder, with the hope that points of evidence might be discovered, exonerating him from the burden of suspicion which he now felt to rest upon him.

Marie had risen even before himself, finding sleep utterly beyond reach. She did her best to arouse him from the depression which he evinced, assuring him of her earnest and changeless faith, and her full conviction that the truth would soon be discovered, and he be freed from all suspicion.

Her words had a cheering effect upon him. Through them all her love manifested itself, and the devoted faith and affection of a warm soul like hers could not fail in making life look brighter to its recipient.

He bade her good-bye, promising to return within a few hours, and took the six o'clock train for the city.

His first movement was to the Central Police Station. He found that his telegram of the night before had been received and its suggestions acted upon, but without result. Nothing had been seen of such a boat as he had described.

His fuller account of the circumstances excited the earnest attention of the officer in attendance. There were no detectives at the office at this early hour, but he promised to send at once for Mr. Long, one of the shrewdest officers on the force, and to dispatch him without delay to the scene of the crime.

Leaving the office, as soon as these particulars had been attended to, he proceeded to his home, anxious to investigate the strange loss of his jewel.

He was living with a widowed sister, who resided in the lower part of the city. On arriving at the house, he found the family just rising from breakfast. His sister met him with a dozen anxious inquiries, and solicitations that he should take some breakfast. But he could not eat, and led her to the parlor, where he explained to her what had happened, with the exception that he suppressed the doubtful circumstances bearing upon himself.

"And now," he continued, "I have another mysterious matter to question you about. Do you remember my taking a trip to the Park, with Will Graham, about a week ago?"

"Yes," she replied. "On Tuesday of last week."

"I wore my diamond breastpin, if you remember."

"Yes. I know that. You wear it so seldom that it is very noticeable."

"Some time since then, probably immediately after that time, it unaccountably disappeared. I know where it is, but how it got there is utterly beyond my powers to fathom."

"Your diamond lost?" she exclaimed, in intense surprise. "How can that be? Why have you not mentioned it before?"

"I was not aware of it myself until last night."

"But you have not been home since yesterday noon, and it is locked up in your room. How do you know it is lost?"

"Because, as I said, I know where it is, but cannot understand how it got there. That, however, is not the question now. It must have been stolen in some manner from the house, and it is this I wish to talk with you about."

"Stolen from the house!" she cried, excitedly. "It could not be stolen. There has not been a thing disturbed."

"Have you noticed any suspicious persons about? It has been stolen, that is unquestionable. But evidently the thief has been very skilful in his operations. The fact of nothing but the diamond being disturbed makes it appear as if the robbery had been committed by some one who knew of my having it, and who made that the single object of his robbery."

"But you must be dreaming, Robert," she replied. "I am sure there has been no stranger in the house, and there is no one here who is not trustworthy."

"Of course I know that."

"Come to your room then. Let us see if you are not mistaken."

She led the way rapidly up-stairs to the room which he occupied.

"There is nothing else missing?" she asked.

"Nothing that I am aware of."

"And where did you place the jewel? Left it, I suppose, with your usual carelessness, lying in an open drawer."

"No, indeed. I remember perfectly well placing it in its box, in my little Indian cabinet, which I locked up, and have not disturbed since."

"I venture, then, to guess that it is locked up and not disturbed yet, and that you have been dreaming bad dreams last night, under the dreadful impressions which you must have got from that murder."

She took hold of the door of the cabinet as she spoke and gave it a slight pull. To the surprise of both it came readily open.

"You have forgotten to lock it!" she cried.

"Look here!" he answered, excitedly. "Don't you see that the catch of the lock is broken? And there lies the box that held my breastpin. It is empty."

She stood looking at him with a surprise that rapidly became alarm. Had any inmate of her house then committed such a crime? No, that was impossible. There were none beside her young children, and one servant.

This servant had lived with them for years, and they had the most complete confidence in her honesty.

"In fact, I would as soon think of doubting myself as of suspecting Betsy," said his sister. "Some robber must have entered the house. But why is the diamond only taken? What could a burglar know about it? One would think he would have stripped the house."

"Whoever it was, he either knew where I kept my breastpin, or entered my room and attacked the cabinet first as a promising point."

"How could he have got here? There has not been a door or window disturbed in the house."

"Have you observed any suspicious person about within a week?"

"No."

"Perhaps some of the rest may have. Betsy is the only one who is all her time about the house. Call her up here, and let us question her. But say nothing about our object."

"Why not?"

"She is a little excitable, as you know. I want her to have her wits about her."

Mrs. Thornton went to the head of the stairs and called loudly for Betsy. Robert, too, left the room, and stood carelessly leaning on the balustrade, awaiting the appearance of the servant.

Betsy came heavily up the stairs, in response to the summons. She was a middle-aged American woman, hard-featured, yet with an open expression of countenance. She stopped on the landing at the head of the stairs, confronting them with an inquiring look.

"I wish to ask you a question or two, Betsy," said Mrs. Thornton.

"Well, ma'am," she replied. "Only don't be long, for my work's waiting."

"Have you noticed any strange person about the house during the last week?"

"Strangers about the house!" she exclaimed, in an alarmed tone. "What would strangers be doing in the house?"

"I do not mean in the house, but about the house; in the neighborhood."

"There's not many I see that ain't strange to me, if it is in the streets you mean."

"But, Betsy, you do not understand," said Merivale quietly. "Have you noticed any suspicious-looking person, any one who seemed inclined to hang around, or watch the house?"

"No, I don't think that I have," said Betsy, deliberately. "I have been too busy in the house to know what was going on outside."

"That will do, Betsy," said Mrs. Thornton. "We will not detain you any longer."

"Of course there's always people going about which some might think suspicious," said Betsy, evidently not inclined to go now that she was given permission. "Has anything happened, Mrs. Thornton?"

"Nothing that I can tell you just now."

"I'll try and think what I've seen," Betsy replied. "About what time do you mean?"

"Since the evening that Mr. Graham was here to tea. You remember that he came home with Robert?"

"Yes, ma'am. Let me think," she continued. "I was standing at the alley gate when they come in, and now I think of it I did see a suspicious man who come along the street just behind them. He's the only one I've took notice of the whole week."

Robert rose from his leaning position and stood erect, resting one hand on the balustrade.

"In what way suspicious?" he quietly asked, though inwardly excited. "Was there anything unusual in his dress or appearance? What kind of looking man was he?"

"I am coming to that, sir," she replied. "It was a rough-looking old fiddler, who came staggering along as if he was drunk or tired, just behind you. He was across the street, and after you went in he stopped and looked at the house close for three or four minutes. I was going to ask him what he wanted, but he took his fiddle and commenced playing, and went down the street with a crowd of youngsters after him."

"What became of him?"

"He went into the grog-shop at the corner, and that was the last I saw of him then."

"Have you seen anything of him since?"

"Yes, I noticed him again the next day. He was passing, but he stopped and spoke to Mrs. Jones's girl across the way. This is the last I've seen of him."

"And you have no other reasons for thinking him suspicious?"

"Nothing, only that the man had a bad face, and was so mighty seedy."

"Do you know this girl of Mrs. Jones's?"

"Know Sally? Well, yes, pretty well."

"I wish you would see her, and find out what he had to say, and if she knows him."

"Of course I will if you want me to. But I can't guess what it's all about. I wouldn't have thought of suspecting the poor old fiddler, only you wanted somebody suspected, and he's the only one I could think of."

"Have a talk with this Sally right away," said Mrs. Thornton. "I will let you know afterward why we are asking these questions."

"Very well, ma'am," replied Betsy. "I'm sure I'll be glad to oblige any way I can."

She descended the stairs with a heavy tread, leaving the brother and sister together.

"There may be something in this," he said, "though I don't hope much from it. Still we must trace every clue, however slight."

"Yet it looks ridiculous to suspect a street fiddler, only because he passed the house and happened to look at it."

"As Betsy says, we have nobody else to suspect, and his following me, and lurking about the house, and questioning the servants in the neighborhood, has a bad look. I think it would be best for me to question the tavern-keeper at the corner. He may know the man."

"I would be sorry to have anything take you into so low a place as that."

"It is the man's information I want, not his liquor. There is no place too low or too dangerous for me to search on this errand. I need not tell you all that is involved in the loss of that jewel. You know its history too well."

"And you know that I never put any faith in the stories about it."

"I did—and have already realized them in my own case."

"What do you mean, Robert?" she asked, alarmed. "Its loss brings evil, they say. What evil has it brought you?"

"None, I hope; only temporary annoyance," he replied, fearing to tell her yet the story of the finding of the jewel. "Excuse me a few moments, I will not be long gone."

He was out of the house before she could again question him, leaving her possessed by a fear which she had not before felt. His words seemed to her to indicate some evil to himself, and she knew him too well to trust his concluding remark.

Some little time elapsed before they returned, which she passed in growing alarm at the thought of her house having been entered by burglars, and in dread of some unexplained danger to her brother.

They finally returned nearly together, having gained information that added largely to their reasons for doubting the fiddler.

Betsy had learned from her fellow-servant, that the latter had been questioned concerning Mrs. Thornton's house. She had answered one or two of the man's questions, principally as to who lived there. He had spoken of knowing Mr. Merivale, but not till after she had mentioned the name. She had asked him what he wanted, but he turned it off with a laugh, saying that he had once known the family, in his younger days, and that he still felt an interest in them.

She had seen him in the street about 7 o'clock that same evening, without his fiddle. There was a light in Mr. Merivale's room, and the old fellow had stopped and looked up into the open window.

"I recollect," said Robert, "I was preparing to go out. I did not return home that night till after twelve. The fellow must have ventured into the house that very evening. Do you recollect what you were all doing?"

"I think I was out visiting a neighbor for an hour or two," replied his sister. "I was home the rest of the time."

"Did you go out alone?"

"No, Mary was with me. I did not go out till after eight, and the younger children were in bed before that hour."

"And where were you, Betsy?"

"In the kitchen, I suppose."

"There was then an opening for a daring thief to do all that has been done. He may have watched us going out, and knowing where my room was has ventured in, hoping to find the way clear."

"But what could he have known about the breastpin?"

"The breastpin!" cried Betsy, in a frightened tone. "Mercy on us, you don't mean to say there's been a thief in the house, and your diamond stolen! What will become of us all? Where's the police? Let me call the police!"

"Hold your tongue, woman!" said Robert, sternly. "You will do more harm than good if you go on in this way. You have lost nothing."

"Maybe I have. Maybe my trunk's ransacked," she cried, excitedly, hasting off with all speed to her room, to take an inventory of her possible losses.

"I knew she would lose her wits," he said.

"It will be only for a few minutes. She will be cool-headed enough after the first excitement wears off. But what did you learn? Anything of importance?"

"Yes. The barkeeper knew this man. He had been in their place before, was very dissipated, and his only apparent means of livelihood was the fiddle, on which he was said to be a good performer."

"Is that all he knew?"

"He knows the haunts of one or two of the man's associates, and has promised to make inquiries about him. He does not know his name, but he goes among his boon companions by the nickname of Dusky Sol."

"Don't depend then, Robert, on this whisky dealer. See the police at once. The man may be well known to them. And if not, they can best follow up the clue you have found."

"You are right, Lizzie," he replied, decidedly, "I will do as you say. Don't wait dinner for me. I must go back to Glendale as soon as possible. My presence may be needed there."

After some further conversation, in which he still concealed from his sister the facts concerning the jewel, he left the house for the purposes mentioned.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOOTPRINTS OF MURDER.

The excitement at Glendale continued unabated. It spread, in fact, with great rapidity, over the surrounding country, and throughout the village that lay near. Curious and sympathizing people gathered in considerable numbers about and in the house, and the greatest anxiety was manifested to learn every detail of the murder, and to see the corpse. The latter desire Louis firmly resisted, declaring that the room should not be opened until the arrival of the police.

By the first train from the city another person appeared upon the scene, a person recognized immediately as Mr. Henry Ogden, the nephew of the deceased.

He looked with surprise and alarm on the unusual and excited multitude, who stood conversing in low tones and with serious aspect, at all points about the house.

"What does this mean, Louis?" he asked, his voice partaking of the excitement of those around him.

"What, sir? Do you not know then? I thought you must in some way have heard, to be here so promptly."

"I had a fear, a kind of presentiment, in fact, that something had gone wrong. I could not rest till I came up here. But what has happened?"

"Mr. Ogden is dead," the servant replied. "He was murdered last night in cold blood."

"My uncle murdered!" cried the nephew, in a tone of horror. "Do I hear aright? Murdered? Are you mad, Louis? But no; I can see by the looks of these people that something dreadful has occurred."

"Murdered, sir," repeated Louis. "At ten o'clock last night, while we were all up and about the house, my poor master was slain in his own room."

"And the murderer?"

"Escaped."

An exclamation of pain broke from the lips of the listener, as if he was deeply affected by these tidings. Henry Ogden was a middle-sized, well-built man, inclined to stoutness, and apparently of a powerful muscular organization. His face was rather handsome, having well-formed features, a clear, sharp eye, and heavy whiskers and mustache, by which his mouth was quite hidden.

He was well dressed and very gentlemanly in general appearance, while he manifested an air of decision in words and manner that showed one naturally fitted to act the master.

The persons around, some of whom knew him, gathered closer to hear his colloquy with the servant.

Among these was a person unusually short, but quite stout, his breadth being markedly disproportionate to his length. He had a round, inexpressive face, light, sandy whiskers, and hair of auburn tint. His dress was the rough garb of a countryman, and he had just entered, apparently coming fresh from the fields.

This odd-looking individual pressed closely up to the speakers, listening to their words with a stolid interest, as if his only impulse was curiosity. There was no trace of feeling upon his countenance.

Louis, at the request of Mr. Ogden, went into a detailed account of the whole affair, describing minutely every point as it had occurred.

He suppressed, however, all mention of the finding of the handkerchief and breastpin, not wishing to make these particulars the common property of the open-mouthed listeners. He was particularly annoyed by the persistent crowding of the man we have described.

"Will you keep back, my friend?" he said, at length. "You can hear what I say without quite getting your ear in my face."

"Don't want to trouble you," replied the man. "Only I was curious to know about it, and my hearing ain't just the best. Hope there's no offence."

"And I hope that you are satisfied. You know all I have got to tell, and there is no use in crowding."

"Let me see the body, Louis," said the nephew, "I know that it will be a terrible sight, from what you have told me. But I must control my feelings."

"I would rather have you wait a little while, sir, until the police arrive. I do not wish to open the room except in the presence of an officer."

"Why not? No one need enter except you and me."

"It might be difficult to keep them out. Besides, there may be indications which we would destroy without knowing, but which might be very important in the eyes of a detective."

"I don't think that is likely. There were a number of you in there last night."

"And who knows what mischief was done? You will excuse me, Mr. Ogden, but I feel it my duty to wait until an officer arrives."

"Oh, well, if you are anxious about it. Though I can't see what harm we would do," replied Mr. Ogden, rather discontentedly.

"It will only be a few minutes. I expect one out by an early train."

The short individual, with a smirk of satisfaction upon his face, left the room. Outside the house he joined another man who was strolling about the grounds.

The latter was dressed more genteelly, and was a finely-formed, stalwart man, with a resolute countenance.

"That servant is a wise fellow," said the short man. "He is bound that no one shall enter the room till the officer comes. Not even the dead man's nephew."

"He has good sense, that's a fact," said the other. "Many a pretty piece of evidence has been destroyed by a gaping crowd."

"Come this way, Tom. There is a story of the murderer's landing in a boat, and of a fight between him and a man who happened to be hanging about the house. Let us take a look at the place."

They walked briskly to the river shore. None of the people had found their way as yet in that direction, and such indications as might have been left were not likely to have been destroyed by trampling feet.

They closely examined the sloping bank. It was composed of hardened mud, thinly grown over with grass, its lower portion being somewhat softened by the action of the tidal water.

"Here are the marks, sure enough," cried the short man. "There has been a boat here the last high tide, and it has been run sharp on the bank. See where the bow has left its shape in the mud."

"And here are foot-prints in the bank. There has been a foot struck hard there, just below the water mark. Here it is again, near the top. And here he has stepped a little to one side."

"I think not," replied the other, leaning over the bank and closely examining the marks. "No, Tom, there have been two men. That is a different foot. They seem to have both landed from the boat, by the direction of the marks. But here is a foot turned out, on the top of the bank, as if a man had jumped into the boat. Have you your rule?"

"Yes," said Tom, handing him the article asked for.

The other measured the footsteps with the greatest care. The first two mentioned were clearly defined in the bank, and the third sufficiently so to get its dimensions pretty accurately. There were other less plainly defined marks.

"Well?" asked Tom, as his companion rose to his feet.

"That will do. You took down the measure?"

"Yes."

"It is plain there have been two men."

"Yes, one of the feet is of a different size from the others. There is something peculiar in that boat mark."

"I see that. The figure-head has been carved like a snake. I wish we could get an impression of it."

"I think I can manage it."

"How?"

"I have a paper of Plaster-of-Paris in my pocket. If we can get a plaster cast now!"

"We can try. Let me have it."

He stepped carefully down to the beach, which the low tide was just lapping, and cautiously poured the white powder into the cavity.

Then taking a leathern cup from his pocket, he quickly poured several cupfuls of water upon it. The plaster drank in the water with avidity, and in a minute had set into a hard mass. Waiting a short time for it to cool, he carefully drew it from the soft bank, a close copy of the figure-head of the boat. It represented, as he said, a serpent's head, with wide open jaws, and seemed to have been skilfully carved, so far as could be judged from the rough impression.

"What next?" asked Tom. "We have done pretty well here."

"I don't quite understand this mark," replied the other, pointing to a depression in the bank, so wide and shallow as to be scarcely observable. He had only noticed it from seeing the bent and broken blades of grass, which scantily covered it.

"It may be a natural depression."

"No. It has been made by the fall of a heavy body. See this broken weed. The leaves are still fresh on it."

"I would give something for your eyes."

"There is talk of a struggle and a man being knocked from the boat. Something of the kind has happened, for that is the mark of a man falling backwards on the bank. Come, Tom, we have got about all that is to be had here. Let us go to the house."

They slowly proceeded thither, the one called Tom wrapping up the plaster cast in a newspaper as they went.

"How will we get rid of that gaping mob?" he asked.

"Send them to the bank."

This suggestion was acted upon. A few skilfully applied words, telling of the marks found upon the river bank, started the people in that direction, and the movement thither quickly extended to nearly all the persons present.

Louis and Mr. Ogden were standing in the main hall conversing, when the two strangers entered, the short man at a distance behind his companion.

The latter walked briskly up to them. The hall was, for the moment, empty of persons, save those mentioned, and Mrs. Montague, who stood at the foot of the stairs.

"Who has charge here?" he asked of Mr. Ogden.

The latter pointed to Louis.

"Just show me the room where this murder happened," the stranger continued, handing Louis his card.

It read as follows:

"Thomas Wayland,
"Special Detective Officer."

"Certainly, sir," Louis briskly replied. "Follow me, if you please. And you also, Mr. Ogden."

They proceeded together up-stairs, followed by Mrs. Montague, and, at some distance, by the short stranger.

As Louis unlocked the door, this person pressed closely up, with staring eyes and open mouth, as if inspired with a burning curiosity.

"Keep back, my man," the servant sharply cried. "We do not want your staring eyes and blundering feet in here."

"Oh, let him alone, I will see he does no harm, and I want some one to hold my bundle," said the officer, extending to the apparent countryman the paper containing the plaster cast.

"Thankee, sir," the man answered. "I jest want to see, and I'll not do no harm."

The room was opened and the detective stepped carefully in, motioning to the others, who were pressing in after him, to stop in the doorway.

The room was precisely as it had been left the previous evening, with the exception that the centre was occupied by a shapeless mass, under the folds of a white blanket, which the careful servant had laid over the body of his master.

All eyes were fixed upon the vague outlines, where the depressions in the blanket marked the lines of the figure beneath; the dreadful suggestion of these outlines being, to some present, harder to endure than would the full vision of the corpse. A mystery full of horrible significance was hidden in the shapeless mass that lay before them.

The detective, however, gave but a cursory glance at this object, his eyes roving rapidly from point to point of the room, and finally becoming fixed on certain marks on the floor.

"Do you know how these marks were made?" he asked of Louis.

"Yes. I noticed that Mr. Merivale's boots were muddy when he came into the room last night."

"Merivale? Is that the man that is said to have grappled with the murderer?"

"So he told us. And these are his boot marks."

The officer stooped down and carefully measured them, making a memorandum of the dimensions.

He examined the carpet carefully for any other marks of a similar kind, but failed to find any.

"Were you the first to enter the room?" he asked of Louis.

"Yes, except Mr. Merivale."

"Merivale again. Who is this Merivale? But first, is everything as you found it?"

"Yes, sir. That chair was overturned as you see it. I saw no other signs of disturbance."

"Come in," he replied, "and lock the door. We may have intruders annoying us."

They did as directed, taking various positions in the room, the short man stationing himself near the window, where he stood with his eyes roving listlessly about, but resting on the faces of the different persons present more than on any inanimate object in the room. He seemed to be a rustic student of human nature from his close observation of their expressions.

"I have but a vague idea of this business," said Mr. Wayland. "I would like you to give me an exact account of the whole affair, and particularly of this Mr. Merivale's connection with it."

Louis proceeded to do so, at great length, and with several interruptions and corrections from Mrs. Montague. As he proceeded the apparent rustic watched his face with eager interest; though he favored the others, particularly Mr. Ogden, with occasional glances.

The latter person seemed somewhat excited by the narrative. His face flushed, he breathed quickly, and gave other signs of inward emotion; probably indignation aroused by the story. The detective seemed deeply interested, particularly when the finding of the handkerchief and diamond was mentioned. The rustic too came forward from his retired position, gazing open-mouthed at the speaker.

"This is decidedly interesting," said Mr. Wayland. "The clue seems plain enough. Can you give me the exact position of the handkerchief and jewel?"

"Yes," said Louis, advancing and removing the blanket from the corpse.

All eyes instantly fell upon the figure which had laid so closely covered. All eyes, with the exception of his who seemed most curious of all. The rustic stood gazing, as in a brown study, on the face of Mr. Henry Ogden. There seemed no special reason for this scrutiny. The nephew grew deadly pale and trembled visibly, on first seeing the dead body of his uncle. But these were natural marks of emotion, and did not seem to call for the stranger's close attention.

We will not detail all the particulars of the examination. The positions in which the articles were found were marked, the appearance of the body and character of the wound carefully examined, and the general aspect of every article in the room closely noted.

Mr. Wayland placed the handkerchief and jewel in his pocket, for closer examination, and asked to see the fragment of a will that had been recovered from the hands of the murderer.

He read it aloud, commenting upon it as he did so.

"It seems to have been his intention to make some unknown person a partial or complete legacy, his nephew becoming heir in a certain event not very clearly defined here. Is this nephew present?"

"Yes," said Louis. "This gentleman is Mr. Henry Ogden."

"This recovery of part of the will is important to you," said the detective. "It will give you a claim upon the estate which the complete document might have negatived."

"Very true," replied the nephew, "though I hope the lost portion may be recovered. To inherit my poor uncle's estate, perhaps against his intention, and through such a means as this dreadful occurrence, will make my heirship most unpleasant."

"It is strange how so important a document as this came into the murderer's hands. Where did Mr. Ogden keep his papers?"

"In this drawer," said Louis, throwing open an inner drawer of a small book-case, "all his important papers were kept locked. It is now unlocked, as you may see, and there is no sign of its contents being disturbed."

"That is true," said the officer. "Mr. Ogden must himself have taken it out. It is impossible just now to tell whether the murderer obtained it by accident or design."

He continued the investigation, finding the key to the drawer in the vest pocket of the corpse. He had unlocked it himself then. Robbery had been no object of the murderer. Nothing was disturbed about the room, and the watch and pocket-book of Mr. Ogden had not been touched.

"Looks a bit like as if somebody wanted the will;—now don't it?" said the rustic, in a drawling tone. The nephew started at this question, and looked searchingly at the speaker.

"Nothing of the kind," said Mrs. Montague, sharply. "The whole business is so plain that an owl might see it. There is a man here who quarrels violently with Mr. Ogden in the evening, threatens him with killing, pretends to leave the place, but is seen hours after lurking in the grounds. What do we find in the room but this man's handkerchief? What do we find in the fingers of the murdered man but this man's breastpin; no doubt torn from him in the fatal struggle? He is in the room almost as soon as we, with a dished-up story of a fight with the murderer, and his clothes muddied to suit. This will is but a part of the story. It has been torn and the balance of it destroyed to add an air of probability to the story. I tell you, gentlemen, there is no mystery and no doubt about the affair."

"There certainly does seem an overwhelming array of circumstances against this person," said the nephew.

"I have had my doubts of him strong ever since I found there was no sign of a boat on the river, according to his story," said Louis, as he unlocked the door, the investigation being ended.

"The tide was running up at that time, weren't it?" asked the rustic.

"Yes."

"And the wind sou'-west?"

"I believe so. What do you mean?"

"Cause you rowed down the river. Maybe now a sail-boat in a hurry mought have gone up with the wind and tide."

"Pshaw!" said the servant, impatiently, "who asked for your guesses?"

"I dunno nothing about such things—only I'm a bit curious. Mought I see that diamond, Mr. Detective, if it ain't axing too much?"

"It will blind you if you get it in the light," said the officer, handing it to him, but apparently watching his movements with great care.

The rustic examined it with close attention for a few moments.

"It's a queer thing," he said, musingly. "Wonder what these bits of thread are doing round it?" and he pointed to some threads that were twined round the body of the serpent.

"Ha! I didn't see them before. They mean something of importance perhaps."

"Don't say again that a fool's got no use of his eyes."

"Eyes or no eyes, there's one thing sure to every man or woman of sense," said the housekeeper.

"And what is that?" asked Mr. Wayland.

"That my poor master met his death from the murderous hands of Robert Merivale!"

A low, distressed cry drew all eyes to the doorway. There, leaning for support against the wall, which was no more white than her death-like face, stood the figure of Marie Dubois, stricken to the heart by the cruel words she had overheard.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 92.)

Ever My Queen.

BY PIERCE EGAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK," "VIOLET; OR, THE WONDER OF KINGSWOOD CHASE," "MARK JARRETT'S DAISY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A REVELATION AND A DISCLOSURE.

"BLANCHE ETHELINE VISCOUNTESS OF HASTINGLEIGH—for the present I sink the more legitimate title, Queen of Beauty and of men's hearts—I greet you after our long separation!" exclaimed Cleveland Dysart, on gaining the centre of the room, and perceiving that the lady whom he addressed had risen to her feet and confronted him as she heard the sound of the door being locked.

For a moment he beheld her stand speechless in amazement at his intrusion; but that at the same time her large, deep, purple-tinted eyes scanned his features with a searching and an eager questioning, in which there was, at least, no trace of fear.

He saw, too, that amid her trials, affliction, and the miseries which had befallen her withal, she had preserved her extreme loveliness unimpaired. Of course the lines of more advanced age had developed, and there were signs of a long-settled grief, but the beauty of the lineaments was unchanged, the graceful form was in its mouldings unaltered, and the mien was gentle and dignified as the antelope's in its pride of lightness and grace.

One flashing inspection by his eyes, one fierce wrenching at his heart, and he felt that the Etheline of his youth, the Etheline of his first and unquenchable love, was again before him, mistress of his heart and mind, as she had been when she had seemed most to return his passion.

It was with the greatest difficulty that he restrained himself from falling at her knees, and pouring out a wild, half-delirious rhapsody; harder still to make his features assume a harsh, rigid, austere expression; but he made the effort, even while an idea flashed through his brain that they might yet pass their future together in some fair land in sunny serenity.

He had expected her to betray excitement, fear, tremor, tears, perhaps swoon on seeing him there, but after she had assured herself who had thus contrived to present himself to her unannounced, she displayed a self-possession which surprised and to a degree disconcerted him. Assuming a dignified deportment, and an icy expression of features, she ejaculated, as if interrogatively—

"General Dysart?"

"Cleveland Dysart to you," he responded, with a sarcastic movement of his lips; "once dear Cleveland. I think, if my memory serves me, that was the coldest affix you used when addressing me. You recognize me, do you not, though perhaps somewhat altered since those fond hours—"

She interrupted him with a sudden movement of her hand directed to the door.

"Unlock it!" she exclaimed, peremptorily.

He checked his speech, and fastened his brilliant, dark eyes upon hers, not only as if to read what purposes were in her mind, but to influence her by that exercise of his will-power which had so wondrously affected her daughter.

But she quailed not, nor did her rigid features undergo any change, and he bit his nether lip as in his turn, adopting a stern, determined tone, he responded—

"Pardon me. I did not contrive this interview with you in order that I might prove the slave of your whims and caprices as in the olden time, but to submit propositions, and, if necessary, commands, which you must perforce obey. I design to speak to you in secret and without interruption. I will not unlock the door."

She proceeded to a window, and with a sudden exertion of strength flung it up.

"I will shriek in my shrillest tones for help, I will fling myself to the pitiless earth beneath, if you do not instantly unlock that door," she cried, with an impetuous vehemence which startled and discomposed him.

"Etheline, one word!" he exclaimed, deprecatingly. "Listen to me—"

She sprang lightly on to an ottoman which stood beneath the open window.

"Unlock that door, or my death shall be the addition to the miseries you have occasioned me," she interposed, with a threatening movement, as if she would leap through the open space. "I will hear nothing," she added, with a frenzied gesture of her hands, "until you have unfastened that door."

His face changed to a deathly sallowness. His will-power had failed him here utterly—worse; it seemed that what he had lost she had gained, for in spite of all the evil passions which struggled at this moment in his breast, he found himself, under a compulsory influence he was unable to withstand, retreating to the door with his eyes fixed upon hers, which were gleaming like two lurid stars.

He drew from his vest the key, unlocked the door and threw it open. He tossed the key on the floor at her feet, and said, as he showed his white teeth, in bitterness of spirit—

"Are you not weary of trampling on my heart? Still I obey, even though it be to incur the risk of being driven from your presence by your men-servants with sticks."

She descended from the ottoman with a quiet but firm calmness, and possessed herself of the key. Then she proceeded to a bell and rang it. A female attendant almost immediately appeared at the still open door.

"The Reverend Mr. Stanley is within the library," exclaimed Lady Hastingleigh, with a remarkable appearance of quiet self-possession. "Ask him to attend me here immediately."

The girl disappeared promptly. Cleveland moved toward the door to depart.

"I came here to confer with you alone, Blanche Etheline, Viscountess of Hastingleigh," he said, harshly, between his grating teeth. "What I have to say to you is not for the ears of canting priests, any more than is what I will wring from your lips. I will take a more favorable time and opportunity for my purpose, although I had thought it well chosen."

"It is well chosen!" she exclaimed, with decision, as she glided between him and the door. "Resume the position you have just vacated, sir," she added. "I desire to confer with you, I wish you to hear me, and I am prepared to listen to you, but it must be under conditions of my choosing. I hear the footstep of Mr. Stanley approaching. The episode of the trick by which you gained access to this apartment unknown to me, will remain untold, or will be spoken, as you decide to go or stay."

He again quickly, eagerly and searchingly perused her pale features; but only to feel more acutely the pangs of despairing love pierce through his heart once more.

He tossed his hat upon a couch.

"I assent to your suggestion," he said, doggedly. "I will stay, especially as the end does not always turn out what we try to model it."

A moment more and a gentleman in the garb of a clergyman entered the room with a quick step, and Cleveland glanced furtively at him. He saw that he was a man about sixty, with massive, resolute, rather stern-looking features, crested by a fringe of iron-gray hair—not a man to be in the slightest degree influenced by any outward pressure, if opposed to his sense of right. He was a man to direct and command—by no means the man to be led or to be controlled by insidious influences.

Cleveland felt that the tables had in some way been turned upon him, and he wondered, with a curious misgiving, what the issue would be.

His doubts were not set at rest by what immediately ensued.

The viscountess, indicating Cleveland with a slight motion of her hand, said—

"This is the gentleman, Mr. Stanley, respecting whom I have had so many long and anxious communings with you. He is the Mr. Cleveland Dysart with whom I was acquainted prior to my marriage."

The Rev. Mr. Stanley fixed a small, round, hazel eye upon Cleveland's face, and he who had met death with fearless calmness in a hundred fights felt a strange apprehension thrill through him, a fear of he knew not exactly what, and in spite of his will he drooped his eyes beneath the direct gaze bent upon him.

"As I have concealed nothing from you," pursued the viscountess, speaking in a clear voice, "you will know, not only why I assent, but why I am anxious to have an interview with this gentleman. Therefore, I request your sanction and your presence—"

"No," interposed Cleveland, with abrupt violence. "What I shall have to say is for no other ear than your own, and I shall choose my time for the utterance. What you may desire to say to me I will listen to in presence of your whole household, if you so wish it. I will open my ears as I have opened them to your faintest whisper or to your loudest tones; but I assert my right to be dumb, if I so will it."

"I quite comprehend the situation," observed the clergyman, after a moment's thought, "and I foresee what interchanges of confidences are likely to be made." He turned to Cleveland, and, speaking with impressive gravity, added, "I will relieve you, sir, of my presence, if you feel that it may act as a check upon the promptings of your better nature, and I shall do so with a sense of security, for, sir, you are in the service of her majesty, an officer and a gentleman. I leave you *tete-a-tete* with a gentlewoman of high rank—considerations which I am sure will command your most profound respect for the situation in which you are placed, and which necessarily will hold supremacy of any tendency to outbreaks of those baleful passions to which poor human nature is but too frequently subject. The force of circumstances urges upon me the exercise of this discretion. I will, therefore, retire to an adjoining apartment, in which I can hear a summons uttered in a raised voice, and see what may be passing, and be myself seen. Understand me, I do not desire to play the part of eavesdropper—it is within your province and that of my lady here to carry on your conversation in the lowest undertone, if you both so will it—but should need demand it, I shall be at hand."

He uttered the last words in a very significant tone. He pressed the hand of Lady Hastingleigh, as if to reassure her, and quitted the room, leaving the door partly open. Across the corridor was an opposite door, which he pushed back, entered the room to which it opened,

placed himself in a reclining attitude upon a couch, and seemed at once to become abstracted in the contents of a book which he had taken up.

Cleveland Dysart never in his life before felt what it was to be utterly baffled. He was now. He had acted with a cunning astuteness, regardless of the cost, to make himself master of a situation in which he would be the hero triumphant in his revenge, and in the accomplishment of even more than the aim to which he had devoted himself; but he found himself the absolute victim of his own plots, and a feeling of malignant rage took possession of him.

He glanced at the inner room, he turned his burning eyes upon the pale, classic, beautiful face of Lady Hastingleigh, and he chafed inwardly with the feelings of a caged tiger—chafed because he felt how potent was the spell of her beauty over him still.

Again he was moved by a desire to quit her presence at once, for he could not see a prospect of the meeting, under the present circumstances, turning out to his advantage—another better-arranged interview might be forced to a very different ending; therefore, acting on his impulse, he made a movement toward his hat, which she detected, and with an irony that stung him to the quick, said—

"Cowardice was not wont to be a failing of Mr. Dysart's!"

He swung round sharply.

"I fear nothing," he exclaimed, with an angry emphasis.

"Then let us proceed with the task before us," she exclaimed, in an elevated tone.

"Until the bitter end!" he exclaimed, acrimoniously.

"Until the bitter end," she subjoined, in a tone devoid of acrimony, but full of energetic decision.

He waited for an instant for her to speak, and she comprehended his silence, for she presently said—

"You sought me, sir, having secured the means of an audience; with what purpose did you seek me?"

"It is changed—gone—fled, nay, now I feel so bewildered, I scarce know how to answer you," he replied, in an undertone, and with evident difficulty. "I came here, I frankly admit, to place you inextricably in my power. To woo you, to entice you by all the entreatings and pleadings of which I might have proved myself master, and failing that, to compel you to accompany me to another quarter of the globe. I have miserably failed: I am in your power—yours, Etheline, for you are still the light of my eyes, the star of my soul, the aspiration of a life which, without you, will be a void, a blank—a purposeless nothing. As I stand now before you, I feel as I felt when you were mine—mine own—when you acknowledged that you reciprocated the love I bore you, and no shadow stood then between our loves."

"You admit that then no shadow stood between us?" she said, quickly, and without a trace of the emotion that seemed to affect him.

He regarded her with some surprise.

"There did not, that I know of," he replied, with a slight hesitation.

"I knew not Hastingleigh then," she pursued.

"No; to my cost I know that," he returned, readily and reproachfully. "It seemed that an adverse destiny summoned me to Ireland to give you this opportunity, the penalty of grasping which you have paid."

"I have *paid* it," she repeated, emphatically. "We did not correspond after you quitted England for Ireland?" she added, interrogatively.

"We did not," he replied, sarcastically. "I looked, yearned, prayed even for one line, but not one came—no, not one."

"Nor did we meet again," she urged, solicitously.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Save on that night in the Hermit's Dell," he rejoined.

"Above the Stepping-Stones?"

"Above the Stepping-Stones: in crossing which, after the abrupt termination of our interview, I was informed you perished."

"It was a coined lie, circulated by the woman who was the nurse to my—my—my child," rejoined the viscountess, for the first time betraying symptoms of agitated emotion. "I fled at sight of my injured husband—"

"Injured!" he cried, with a bitter laugh; "not by me. *I* never injured *him;* for, false woman, you well know I saw you not from our parting prior to your engagement to him, save for those brief moments when you came, as you said, to bid me farewell forever."

"Forever!" she exclaimed, with intense energy; then she added, with a rapid articulation. "Nor had I injured my husband, even in thought; yet it was an injury to his honor, unreflectingly committed by me out of a tenderness for what I imagined you had suffered on my account."

"Imagined I had suffered," he repeated, passionately. "What you must have known I suffered."

"Hear me out," she interposed, with an imperial wave of her hand, and a resumption of her reserved, cold dignity. "I wished to add that the instant the voice of my husband in that terrible moment fell upon my ears, and the bright lightning revealed to me his ashen face, it flashed through my mind that I had constructively—but Heaven knows how innocently—wounded his dignity and his honor by my clandestine proceeding. I fled like a maddened, guilty creature. What followed I know not, for the first lucid effort of my mind revealed to me that *I* was a prisoner in the custody of a wretched, hard-hearted old woman, in a miserable hut, and had been detained there for years. I was the victim of the machinations of a revengeful woman, who poured her rancorous resentment, inspired, though not by me, with too sad a cause. I concealed the restoration of my reason in order that I might ascertain what had occurred during my insanity. I found that my husband was living and abroad, but of you I could obtain no tidings, and feared—"

She paused.

"Oh, Lady Hastingleigh," he appended, with undisguised bitterness, although he laughed, "your sympathy would have suffered no violent shock if it had known all. I received your husband's bullet, but not in a vital part, as you perceive. All it did was to keep me stretched upon the dank grass, wet with the rain and my blood, for some hours. I crawled to a cottage, where I lay concealed until I had strength to be moved, and then I was for a lengthened period—it matters little to you now how long—on the threshold of a death which would have been welcome to me. But I was not to die—even when I felt that I had nothing in the world to live for, because, as I have said, I had been told that you perished that night in an attempt to recross the Stepping-Stones. So when my physical strength was restored to me, I set out for India, and tried to fling my life away in many a battle-field. Still, death was not for me; I was preserved for a purpose, Etheline—to return to you—and I am here!"

She closed her eyes for a moment, and a pale, gray tint passed over her white features, as though inwardly she was suffering severely from a struggle between contending emotions.

He observed it, and a renewed hope that his influence over her had not wholly vanished sprang up in his mind.

"Here," he repeated, in a lower tone, "to reveal to you that purpose for which I believe that I have been preserved and brought back to you. The love I bore you I thought I had transferred to your counterpart. One look on your countenance has dispelled that illusion. My love for you has revived with a tenfold vigor, and I feel that you are dearer to me than you ever were, and I entreat you to permit me to prove it."

"I will!" she exclaimed, with a saddened and curious emphasis.

"Your feigned death," he proceeded, rapidly, "has never been contradicted to the world. To the world, therefore, you are dead—to him to whom you were united by the conventional bonds of wedlock you are dead."

"No!" she interposed, almost vehemently.

"Worse than dead, for you are parted, never to be reunited. In his eyes you are a tainted, guilty thing—"

"Most undeservedly," she interposed.

"Most unjustly, I admit," he responded; "but you are here, unrecognized, unknown, dead to the world. Leave this country forever. I will be to you—"

"Stay!" she interrupted, in the strange, cold, haughty, imperial way in which she had twice or thrice before addressed him. "This conference, it was arranged between us, should be the medium of explanations unto the bitter end. I am prepared to go to the uttermost limit of my task. Do you do yours as firmly, as resolutely, and as truthfully. Let me therefore reveal to you what I have discovered after long hours of rigid self-examination, pursued in silence and solitude, when my memory was clear and my mind unbiassed by any surrounding or immediate influences. A recurrence to my past with you, brought in review before me every incident which had transpired between us, from the first interview I had with you until the last. Freed from contact with you, not breathing the air of the same hemisphere with you, I questioned to the very verge of research the feelings which you had raised in my breast for you, to discover, with a strange, incomprehensible joy, that I never loved you—"

A cry escaped his lips, and he started back as though she had wounded him with an empoisoned weapon.

"Do not interrupt me!" she exclaimed, sternly. "I will do my duty at all risk, at all cost. You obtained a mysterious influence over me—a spell, a fascination which enthralled, enmeshed me, mind and soul, even my volition. The extraordinary influence was most powerful when you were before me, strong when in correspondence, but fainter, though still felt, when we were apart. I have chided myself when a strange misgiving of my love for you has crossed my brain. I have but too frequently felt my blood run cold when grieving that the force of circumstances had made me another's. An impression forced itself upon me that *he* was drawn closer to me by a tie more resembling love in its unsullied purity than you had ever been. When, after the derangement of my mind, it had recovered its balance, I awakened fully, firmly, immovably to the conviction that in my relations with you I had been spell-bound by *an evil eye!*"

A growl of astonishment and disconcerted rage burst from his lips. He was about to utter some violent reproaches, when, with perfect calmness and self-possession, she made a movement of her hand toward the reverend gentleman seated upon the couch in the inner room. He had lowered his book, and was looking at him as if his attention had been attracted by the sound which had broken from him.

He bit his lip until it bled, and then, trembling in every limb, even visibly, he said—

"Have you ended, madam?"

"Not yet," she responded, coldly, but resolutely. "Since your return to this country you have been animated by a desire to inflict the wildest dreams of vengeance upon my husband."

"I have," he muttered, gloomily.

"You have, by some inscrutable act of providence, discovered my daughter, and you have designed to make her an instrument to further the purposes of your cherished revenge."

"I have," he rejoined, quickly; "and it now rests solely with you whether I abandon that design or pursue it also to the bitter end."

"You have, so far as I can ascertain, been able to wield over her a similar unholy influence to that you exercised over me."

"Far more potently; and will, to such an extent as shall make you curse the spirit of fickleness within you, which has made you—what you are."

She winced slightly at this taunt, but yet preserved her composure.

"I have rescued her from your thrall," she rejoined, coldly, "and I shall have her under my charge, fenced round with securities you will not have the power to weaken, much less destroy. For my husband, whether it be or be not the will of Heaven that we should be reunited, it is my sovereign duty, having been the unhappy cause, to shield him with my unfailing, watchful solicitude from all attempts you can make upon his happiness or upon him personally. Your incitements to vengeance cannot equal my inducements to avert from him all the evils you may attempt to inflict upon him. I have made every preparation for you, and in imparting this information to you, conjoined with the unreserved explanation I have given you, I say now depart! banish me from your memory! forget that I have ever lived, as I shall you, for all between us ends now and forever!"

She moved as if about to quit the room without an inclination of the head, but with a firm, cold, though defiant look in her eyes.

"Stay for one word, spotless Viscountess Hastingleigh, unacknowledged wife of a peer of the realm!" he said, with a scornful sarcasm. "Let me correct a false impression which appears to have obtained in your mind. All between us does not end now and forever. Really the 'all' has only just commenced."

She answered him only by a sign to the Rev. Mr. Stanley, who at once approached her, and taking her hand, led her away. Her eye was fixed steadfastly on his to the last, and he comprehended its utter meaning. She was his queen no more.

He started from a short revery after she had disappeared from his sight, for there was a touch upon his arm.

A servant in livery was at his elbow.

"General Dysart," exclaimed the man, "I have orders to attend you to the door."

He bit his lips and frowned, but made no response until he was out in the air, and felt it blow cold on his forehead.

He laughed savagely.

"All ended?" he ejaculated. "It commences in earnest from to-day."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE CUP AND THE LIP.

If the handwriting of Etheline had looked charming in the eyes of Gordon Athol, his firm, educated, elegant penmanship appeared inexpressibly lovely in hers. "To Etheline," were the only words on the superscription; but they afforded her a long and delightful contemplation, especially as they furnished her only with the most speculative notion of the communication within.

That it embraced gentle, tender, noble thoughts, couched in graceful language, she was sure; but the exact sentiments, however, were yet to be revealed. What were they? Did he accept, as she had done, the inevitable? Were they words of leave-taking in the words of the poet—"Fare thee well, and if forever—still forever fare thee well?" They would not be less fond, less wishful for her happiness, if framed in less poetical language.

But, were they words of farewell? His was a firm and resolute spirit, she had easily gathered that knowledge from her contact with him, and though high-souled and susceptible in questions of honor, still his was not a nature which drew wide distinctions, and set out an insurpassable line of demarcation for an accident of birth. Were they burning words, urging her to reconsider her resolve, and unite her fate with his in defiance of all considerations, save the promptings of an all-absorbing love?

It was strange for how long a time she gave the reins to her imagination, and supplied herself with various responses he might, could, would have made to her letter to him, before she attempted even to peep within. It was so pleasant to ponder over what he had probably written, it was like talking with him, communing with him, listening with rapt attention to his only too, too agreeable voice. So delightful to be in dreamy doubt, to fancy, imagine, conjecture all kinds of delicious things that he would in all probability address to her, and which one perusal occupying only too brief a space would dispel forever.

At last she turned the superscription downwards, and with a throbbing heart applied her trembling fingers to the task of opening it. It was sealed with bright red wax, which bore a crest. She examined it, and saw with a feeling as if a hand of ice had griped her heart that it was a lion rampant.

A voice from one unseen seemed to hiss in her ear—

"The shield with the Scottish lion rampant will not admit a sewing-machine within its pale."

And the light of Heaven seemed to fade out of the atmosphere, and carry with it all warmth and vitality, and to assume the character of a dreary, damp, earthy vault.

"What ought it to matter to me now what he may have written to me?" she thought, as a desolate moan forced itself from her lips. "I will read what he has said and burn the epistle—destroy every vestige of it, banish it from my memory, forget him, it, all forever—if I can—if I can."

The bitterness with which she wept as her quivering lips repeated the last words intimated that her task would be next to an impossible one.

So she opened the letter, and with mixed feelings of joy and sorrow read the contents. They were as follows:—

"My Etheline, my own love, if it had been possible to love you more after I had perused the communication with which you so much honored me, I should have worshipped you with a higher and holier attachment than that I endeavored to express at our last meeting, but, deeply and tenderly as it moved me, I found that the love which you have created in my heart and mind would not admit of addition, for it is as vital to my existence as the air I breathe. It is so far above the reach of all earthly considerations that I have not hesitated as to the course I have determined to pursue. You have, oh! supreme queen of my aspirations, of my very life, confessed that you love me. It is all I seek to know, for now we are all in all to each other. The outside world is nothing henceforth to me, and will not be to you. I have settled my mundane affairs, so far as my family are concerned, and have commenced the battle of life in a condition in no degree superior to your own—in some particulars inferior. I have begun my career as a seaman before the mast. I know how to rise, and shall rise to a position that will enable me to offer you a comfortable and a happy home—out of the earnings of my good right hand—a home that will not have been beholden to a hundred descents, but one which will boast of, and will have been won with the nobility of labor. I will dwell no further on this. Information furnished to me leads me to believe that the person who claims to possess a maternal right over your actions has taken you on a voyage to the Cape of Good Hope—a name which has come to me as the harbinger of good tidings—at least as a good omen. If this be true we shall be re-united before these lines meet your eye; if I have been misinformed, I know not how long a time may pass ere we meet again. But, Etheline, I pray you to have faith and trustfulness in my love as I shall have in yours. I ask you to adhere to your unsolicited promise not to forget me, or to let another occupy my place in your loving estimation. If you have not left England I shall come back to you, and I will find you, however secretly and cunningly those who would keep you from me may contrive to hide your abode from me, and will be true to you as truth itself, and never cease to love you—oh! my own darling Etheline!—as now."

It bore in addition only the word Gordon, and there it ended.

It contained no address, made no mention of any place at which a communication, even at a distant date, might reach him, and it flashed through her mind, as she looked on the simple signature, that even if she desired to assist him in discovering her abode she would not know where even a hint would reach him.

The epistle seemed to be very, very short to her, not half, nay, a quarter long enough to satisfy the cravings of her heart. She would have been glad if it had covered many sheets, and had been crossed and recrossed, even though it would not have answered any material purpose. In fact, it said all there was to be told—more, indeed, when the selfish instincts of her love came to be tempered by her reason, and the generous impulses of her nature, for she saw only too plainly that for her sake he had cast to the winds all those magnificent prospects of which the duke, his father, had spoken to her in such magniloquent terms.

We are afraid that she did nothing more that day than read over the note, and ponder and read the lines again and again with flushed cheeks, and kiss the name of Gordon many many times, for there was no eye to witness that evidence of her love, and to sigh, and weep, and wring her hands, and moan in weary, utter despair.

She knew that it would be obeying the dictates of common sense to banish all thoughts of him from her mind and to burn his letter, and so end it all forever; but she did neither one nor the other, and when Lollie returned in the evening from her day's work Etheline had got the darling epistle stowed away out of sight, but very near her heart, and was forming pictures in which she was the denizen of a log hut, and her husband a young sunburnt backwoodsman of the name of Athol, looking lovingly in her face, and snapping his fingers at the world and its cold, hard, proud distinctions.

With all Lollie's lightness and apparent frivolity, there was a good deal of practical worldly wisdom and steadiness in her character. Her pretty face and cheery disposition, and a strong disposition toward gayety, had placed her before she received attentions from Charles Templeton in the way of temptation, and had she not fallen over head and ears in love with one above her station, she might have insensibly fallen into some mishap or other, but that acted as a steadier, and, although she could not have him, the alternative of "Bob" awakened her to a sense of the brink upon which she had been running. When she left home rather than marry a man she not only could not love but did not like, she was fully conscious that she had nothing to depend upon but her hands, her health, and her good name. So she had already begun to exhibit a reserved manner when Etheline joined her, and now that she had to take upon herself, as it were, the office of mentor, she became quite a staid, business young person.

She obtained an embroidery machine on hire, and, knowing where to apply for work, she soon obtained for Etheline as much as she could do, while she went to her daily work herself in the hope of eventually obtaining a machine, so as to be able to work at home with her friend.

For a time matters went on smoothly enough. Both girls worked hard, and realized a pittance, which, when added together, paid for their provisions and their rent, but went only a small way to provide them in clothes. The money which Etheline had brought with her had sufficed to purchase her a wardrobe, for she had none but what she stood upright in when she joined Lollie, and to furnish a deposit for the machine. Everything else had to be provided out of their earnings, and early and late the closest application did not furnish them with more than a trifling surplus. Withal, they were both more cheerful than might have been expected.

The truth was, they were resigned to their position, and did their utmost to be contented with it. They worked unrepiningly, and talked over their situation when they ought to have been sleeping, and many a night, in the small hours, if the cheeks of Mr. Athol and Mr. Templeton did not burn they ought, according to the aphorism, to have done so. When fagged and worn out with their long day's labor, they glided to their bed without a murmur, and rose in the morning with their pale faces to confront their work bravely, and go through with it without flagging or faltering.

The close confinement began to tell upon Etheline more than upon Lollie, for the latter had her morning and evening walk in the fresh air, and Etheline never moved out of the house save to church on Sundays. They had no companions to lighten their hours after work was ended, and, indeed, they both considered it discreet, to prevent unwelcome visits from Etheline's enemies, to keep their residence a secret from everybody save their employers, who had no more interest in them than that work entrusted to them should be properly executed.

But Etheline by degrees grew more pensive and white. She left off her work at night with a terribly worn and fagged air, and rose to her task with an unrefreshed look. Lollie saw with affright that she was growing weaker and becoming rapidly ill, and with dismay she conjectured her being laid up, for, work as she might, she would be unable to support the two; but desert Etheline she would not, could not—would sooner have given up her own life.

To strengthen her alarm, the landlady of the house, a kind hearted woman, observed how thin and wan Etheline was growing daily, and, without saying a word to either of the girls, she caused her own medical man to "have a look" at Etheline, and he said, unhesitatingly and emphatically, that she must leave off working at once, and go into the country for a month, or if she continued as she was going on, she would soon kill herself.

Etheline was told this, and when Lollie conferred with her, and tried to plan some way by which the doctor's advice might be followed, Etheline only looked up in her eyes with a sad smile, shook her head gently, and said—

"I am only waiting for the end, Lollie, love; what matters it how soon it comes? It cannot come too soon."

Lollie could not answer her, but cried hysterically, and vowed mentally that somehow or other, Etheline should obtain her country trip. The money was the stumbling-block. How was that to be got? She racked her poor little brain. She knew it would be useless to apply at her home, and where else? At last a thought struck her.

The next day, when her dinner-hour arrived, she set off at a run to Duncan, M'Culloch, Fraser & Co., and went up into the work-room, indifferent to the prospect of a squabble which she might have with Miss Camoy, who had been reinstated in her old position. There was a fragrant smell of cooked viands filling the room and the approaches; but, although the appetizing odor made her feel faint, for she had only spared herself two slices of bread and butter for her dinner, Lollie heeded them not. Her mind was occupied with her purpose, which was to consult and take counsel with the best and kindest of their old companions respecting Etheline, and to raise a subscription so as to be able to carry out the doctor's advice.

To her intense satisfaction, she found on entering the room that Miss Camoy was absent, and the girls crowded round her with a cry of welcome, for she had been a great favorite with all of them. She knew there was no time to lose, and she addressed herself to her task without preamble. She recalled to their recollection the Queen of the Work-room, rapidly adverted to without explaining the circumstances which had brought her and Etheline into "partnership," and related how, by close confinement and overwork, preying on a delicate constitution, the latter had been brought to death's door. She spoke volubly, and with earnest sincerity and unstudied eloquence, in a language and with an idiom that came home to them.

They knew only too well what hard work and privation meant, and the priceless value of rest and fresh air, so with that unselfish generosity which is more frequently found among the needy than the wealthy, they declared themselves ready to subscribe, and brought out their purses to a girl. Alas, however, the contents, with a few exceptions, were meagre, and while some were contributing, and others suggesting how the total should be increased, Miss Camoy entered the room. No sooner did her cat-like eyes fasten upon Lollie than she ran up to her, ordered her to quit the room, and commenced pushing her out of it.

This the girls present would by no means stand. They got between Lollie and Miss Camoy, and they all in shrill accents talked to her at once, threatening to leave the work-room in a body if Lollie were not permitted to fulfil the mission upon which she had sought them. But Miss Camoy shrieked too, and asserted her authority in piercing tones; but the girls were firm. They declared their dinner-hour to be their own, and they stood by Lollie most resolutely.

In the midst of the confusion, Fisell, the spectre of his former self, entered the room, and was at once appealed to by all, so that he became distracted, and could comprehend nothing save that he saw Lollie, and then his thoughts instantly reverted to Etheline. He guessed that the presence of Lollie had reference to her—perhaps her return to the "'ouse;" and, therefore, to afford him one more chance to make her his queen, he resolved to stand by Lollie, too, and interposed in so brusque a manner that Miss Camoy for an instant became speechless: but when he openly declared himself as a partisan of Lollie's for the occasion, her fury knew no bounds. Blind with passion, she made a dash at him, and filled the room with the sound of a smack which she "landed" on his cheek.

In his anger and agony he struck her on the face with his clenched fist, and in response she fastened upon him like a tiger cat. Instantly they edged round the room at a fearful pace, so that the young ladies knew not whether to cheer with enthusiasm or scream with affright. They, however, did both, and these outcries brought other persons on to the scene—among them Mr. Charles Templeton.

The two antagonists were separated, Mr. Fisell much blown, squinting wildly, and his face looking like a plain map, with the railways marked in red lines over it. Miss Camoy, whose nose had assumed the size, color, and polish of a ripe tomato, with hair dishevelled and chignon scattered, was led off the scene, making desperate efforts to appear to be dying on the spot.

Peace was thus restored, and the whole affair explained to Mr. Charles Templeton, who flushed crimson, and then turned white when the name of Miss Leslie was mentioned.

He looked round for her, but could not see her. Had she gone? No: she had not yet received the subscription for Etheline, and at any risk, any self-humiliation, she determined to stay for that. But she had, with only a too quick seeing, observed Mr. Templeton enter the room, and she had shrunk into a corner to escape his notice. She was not, however, successful in that, for he was not only informed of her presence, and the object of her mission, but she was pointed out to him, and he walked direct up to her.

She glanced timidly at his face, and then drooped her eyes to the floor, for she saw a swift expression of pain pass over his features, and she heard him exclaim—

"Great Heaven, Lollie, how changed you are!"

For a moment he remained silent, and afterward some of the girls declared that his eyes filled with water as they raced over Lollie's altered face and form; but presently, clearing his voice, he said—

"Young ladies, I quite understand the object of Miss Leslie's visit, and the firm, I am sure, remember Miss Smith's services here with too much satisfaction to permit a change of air for the benefit of her health to depend upon contributions from your hard-earned salaries; therefore, if Miss Leslie will kindly accompany me to Mr. M'Culloch's room, we shall be able, I am sure, to arrange this little affair to the satisfaction of all parties."

Right lustily did the young damsels cheer this speech, and with one voice they declared Mr. Templeton to be a duck of most dove-like qualities and then Mr. Templeton tendered his hand to Lollie.

Crimsoned with a blush deeper than the centre of a musk rose, whiter than the snows on the Jungfrau, Lollie gave him the tips of her fingers, and trembling like an aspen, accompanied him, amid the plaudits and words of encouragement of her late companions, from the room.

It somehow seemed that they were obliged to take Mr. Templeton's room in their way to Mr. M'Culloch's, and that they should pause within it for a few minutes with closed doors.

As soon as they were alone, Mr. Charles Templeton took both Lollie's hands in his, and said—

"In the name of mercy, Lollie, my pet, what does this change all mean? Tell me all—everything. At the very least, I can be a friend to you—an honorable friend, Lollie."

Poor Lollie knew no artifices nor subtleties. It seemed the most natural thing in the world to her that she should communicate to him everything that had happened. She seemed to feel that she ought to have no secrets from him, so she told him all about Bob, and how she had left her maternal home in consequence of him; how she and Etheline had lived together since; how hard they had worked, and how ill she had become.

"Both!" ejaculated Charles Templeton, emphatically; "and both must go into the country."

He took down her address, and gave her one where she could always communicate with him. This was done on both sides in good faith, for she was innocent, and he was honorable. A short interview with Mr. M'Culloch resulted in his handing to her, in kindly and feeling terms, a check for twenty-five pounds. Charles Templeton saw her to the door, bade her farewell "for the present," and sent a porter with her to the bank to get the check converted into cash.

How happily, how joyously, with five new, crisp five-pound bank-notes in her possession, did she make her way back to the lodgings where she hoped to make Etheline happier and more cheerful than she had been, because now, with this illimitable sum of twenty-five pounds, she would be able to accompany her friend to the country, and to nurse her.

She held her money tightly in her hand, and ran and walked until she regained her apartments, where she found Etheline at work, but looking pitiably worn and weary, and sad.

She told her all that had happened—how she had seen her dear, dear Charles, and how he had pressed her hand and whispered, at parting—

"Hope on, Lollie; all will come right at last."

She spread out the new bank-notes, and was already planning out the course to be taken without a day's delay, when the door suddenly opened, and revealed the persons of her mother and her Aunt Tracy.

In Lollie's weak condition the shock was too much for her, and with a scream she swooned outright.

Mrs. Leslie began to wring her hands, but Aunt Tracy intervened.

"Don't be a fool, Laura," she exclaimed to her sister. "You see she is still dressed. The cab is at the door: we will take her at once. Let her remonstrate when we have got her safe. The woman who came with us will attend to this girl who has been the cause of all this trouble."

So saying, with a lusty vigor, she caught Lollie, senseless still, up in her arms, and hurried with her out of the room, followed by the weeping mother.

Etheline was too weak to interpose. She could, as it was, barely keep herself from fainting; but if she had made any attempt even to follow them, she would have found a barrier in the form of Anne Sydney, who strode like a bully into the room before Mrs. Leslie had quitted it.

The hard-featured, merciless woman smiled savagely on Etheline as she surveyed her, regardless of her death-like aspect, and shaking her closed hand threateningly at her, snarled—

"You are cunning and wilful, my dainty lady—subtle and shrewd for one so delicate and so inexperienced too, yet not enough, you find, to elude me. As well expect to escape from your shadow in the bright sunlight as to evade me."

She cast her eyes hastily about the room, and they fell on the five bank-notes which Lollie had left behind. She snatched them up and pocketed them.

"Come," she cried, sternly, to Etheline, "get on your finery. This place is no longer one for us. I have got a home for you, for I mean to make you my annuity. Our pilgrimage through the world must be made together until I have glutted my revenge on your noble parents, and then—then—"

"Then—oh! then, my Anne, one will go up like a rocket to the light blue ethereal sky, and the other will go down to the blazing, blue, sulphurous depths of Tartarus," cried a husky, gasping voice from the threshold of the door.

The woman swung round and beheld old Sydney protruding his pimpled face toward her, grinning like a satyr.

By his side was a man with the aspect of one who had been long abroad. Sydney pointed to him.

"My good friend May!" he exclaimed. "Alan May, from New York. Speak, my friend; do you know this woman, born Anne Marchmont?"

"I oughter know her," the stranger responded; "she was married to me in Brooklyn."

With a savage yell, like that of a hyena, the woman born Anne Marchmont made a dash at the pair and hurled them violently aside, sprang through the door-way, fled down the stairs, and out of the house.

Old Sydney laughed and winked both eyes.

"Let her go," he said; "the detectives watching below will interview her. Ahem! Now, my lady, if you please!" he called aloud, in a respectful tone, to some one in a room beneath.

It was instantly answered by the appearance of a veiled lady at the door-way.

Then the old man knelt at the feet of Etheline.

"Don you remember these words?" he said, gently, "'My name is not Lyddy, but I live in hope. Lord hear me—I live in hope!'"

Etheline lay reclining back in her chair, white—whiter than a shroud. Her eyes were closed, and her lips were slightly parted.

Then there broke from the lips of the veiled lady a piercing, heart-broken, wailing scream. She tossed her hands wildly upward, and cried—

"Heaven, hast thou no pity—no mercy? My child, my child—she is dead!"

Old Sydney's head drooped until it touched the floor, and he sobbed like a weak girl.

The man, Alan May, however, drew from his pocket a case containing several small bottles, and selecting one he approached Etheline with it.

(*To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 35.*)

☞ The miners in Relief District, Oregon, recently went almost wild with joy over the birth of the first baby in camp. The blacksmith's forge was transformed into a battery, anvils were made to answer the purpose of ordnance, and a keg of blasting powder was consumed in firing salutes in honor of the stranger.

The Secret.—Those who prize a beautiful head of hair, (and we know our lady friends all do,) will thank us for a few words on the invaluable qualities of AYER'S HAIR VIGOR as a dressing. In our own case it heals a humor, keeps the head free from dandruff and scurf, stops the tendency of our hair to fall, and heightens its beauty. A slight touching with it removes the coarse and dry appearance which neglected hair puts on, imparts a rich gloss, and makes us presentable in the most fashionable company. Such rare qualifications, presented in a single preparation, create for it an enduring value; but add to these the faculty of restoring to gray locks their youthful color, and maintaining our good looks with so small an expenditure of time and attention, and you stamp it prime favorite with the public, and insure its permanent and enduring popularity.—[*Huntsville (Ala.) Republican.*]

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THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, AUG. 2, 1873.

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LETTERS FROM ZIG.

PLUCK.

The homeliest old woman I ever saw in my life had had three husbands. Her face was deformed, and frightful for a stranger to look at. Her voice sounded like a saw-mill with the asthma. She was poor in pocket, awkward as an ox in her motions, and anything but an angel in temper. And yet this old creature appropriated unto herself three husbands, one after another, in the course of time; while fairer, richer, sweeter women lost their bloom and withered away in ancient maidenhood or pined through their existence as waiting widows. I don't remember what was the occupation of the old lady's first husband, but her second husband was a minister, I know, and her third husband was a very wealthy farmer, and the homely old woman humored his whims and lived in clover to the end of her days, and I suppose went to Heaven and joined her three husbands. I think likely she frightened 'em all to death with her homeliness. But how did this homely old woman manage to get three husbands, when other women couldn't get one?

It was pluck.

It was her indomitable spirit, her unconquerable, relentless, husband-catching spirit. Where other women were modest, retiring and despairing, she was sprightly, tongney and persevering, and in matrimony and war, spirit and perseverance win the day. She was bold and determined, and cut the other women out of all the three husbands, because they were not bold and determined, although they wanted the husbands as much as she did. It's no offence to say it, because women do chase after husbands, very excellent women too, and everybody knows it.

Blessed be pluck!

Whether in husband-winning, bread-winning, or winning the highest earthly good, pluck always gains the day. I don't say the highest earthly good isn't a husband, mind you. It may be, and then again it mayn't. But I'm sure that even in husband-catching, pluck will win when nothing else will.

Pluck is that spirit in man or woman which will never give up, but will work and fight till it drops dead. It is the bravest, brightest, strongest faculty of the human soul. There is no gate this side of the gates of Heaven which daring, invincible pluck will not open to mortals, and indeed I don't think it would be too strong to say it would help open the gates of Heaven.

Some years ago two certain partners failed in business. All on a sudden one day their whole present reality and future prospect went to smash like a lamp-chimney. They failed for what was a prodigious sum in those times. In these days it wouldn't be anything—not a successful failure at all. But it was a famous failure in its time, and no human eye could see how the two men would ever work out of it. One of them never did work his way out. He was a poor, spiritless noodle. He just sat down up to his chin in debt, and gave up like a whimpering baby. He never moved hand or foot to try to wade out of the slough of debt, and never thought he ought to try. There was no more vim or hopefulness in his nature than there is in the nature of a chunk of dough. For all the life or helpfulness there was in him, his wife might as well have been tied to a disagreeable dead body at once. He lived a poor, whining, spiritless, unpleasant noodle, and died the same, if he is dead. What did the other partner do? The other partner was a tough, wiry, determined man, daring as an eagle and obstinate as a mule. He, too, was in debt up to his chin, and had exactly the same world before him that the other had. Did he, too, sit down in the mud and whine? No, indeed. He took a brief, grim survey of the ruins about him, and then went calmly to work struggling upward again. He took advantage of all ways and means known to business men, worked early and late, and looked ahead with a long, clear vision. While the other partner sat down and whined, this one shouldered the debts of both, and worked like a man. There is no case this side of absolutely being dead and buried which is utterly hopeless, and to-day the man who failed once but had pluck, is richer than he ever hoped to be in the wildest visions of his youth. His name stands high among men as an honored and successful business-man, to be which is unfortunately the highest honor in America. The whining noodle said his former partner's success came from his luck. He was mistaken. It never came from luck. It came from pluck. There is no such thing as luck.

To be sure, all this was a very earthy, material sort of business. The heaping up of riches is rather a low aim to spend all one's god-like energy in pursuing, but it would have been just the same if the man of pluck had been pursuing some grand and heroic aim. He would have reached his goal all the same. As for the whining, discouraged noodle, the world would have been better off if he had never been born. This world has no use for a noodle. One of the most inspiring of earthly lessons is the pathetic, yet brave and noble story of Elias Howe, who invented the sewing-machine. I like to read it over and over again. He crossed the Atlantic fourteen times in his wild goose-chase of a sewing-machine. He got hold of the wrong end of his idea at first, and tried for years to advance from that end, while he himself was well-nigh starving, and his family were supported by his father-in-law. I wonder what his mother-in-law thought about him? At last when his idea had come to him in proper shape, so that he could work it into something tangible, then on the one hand the whole grand army of tailors set upon him pell-mell, and began to fight him. He would ruin the whole gang of them, take the bread out of their mouths, they said. That's about as much sense as your average human being has, poor dunce! On the other hand, while the tailors said he would ruin their trade, no capitalist would believe that his precious idea was anything but a humbug, and so he was buffeted between the frying-pan and the fire. Still he stood by his idea. For nineteen years, I believe it was, he fought for that idea, defying fate and his mother-in-law. Finally grim fate had to yield, and after sorrowful, hungry years, showers of gold and blessings fell upon the weary old man's head, and he died not only worth millions of money, but what was infinitely greater and grander than that, conscious that his brains alone had built up the gigantic sewing-machine interest of the world. Instead of stealing the bread from a few miserable little tailors, he had put bread directly into the stomachs of millions of poor people. Think of the sewing-machine agents once, if you are inclined to doubt it!

It is astonishing how many impossible things one determined, plucky little man or woman can drive through in this world, where people must work and fight. I remember once seeing a little fellow completely cow and frighten away a big lubberly bully of twice his size and strength, by sheer force of pluck. Just so big lubberly difficulties sneak away from before a bold, unconquerable spirit. If we believe we can, then we can. Probably it would be ever so much nicer if there were no difficulties to overcome. If we could lie under perennial summer trees and have bread and beefsteaks fall into our mouths, I dare say it would be very fine, but what would we amount to, pray? Would there ever be any work done in the world if people did not have to struggle against hunger, cold and poverty? No, there wouldn't; and you and I, friend, instead of being the well-dressed, good-looking people we are, would be no more than naked, lazy Hottentots. Did you ever think of that? And more, if there were no spiritual difficulties which the soul had to struggle against and overcome, how could it reach the higher heights of moral grandeur and purity, how rise toward the divine? Only for the wrong and the bad in the world and in one's own soul, there would be no saints, heroes and martyrs who have struggled and overcome, and left the human race better and happier for their struggles. It is better, far better, that man must work and fight.

To the hand of him who comes to his work hopeful, resolute and brave, all things shall be given. How I adore such a spirit! There is an undying inspiration in it—a sacred fire which burns forevermore.

ZIG.

LOOK ALOFT.

BY NANNIE.

Young man, are you endeavoring to gain a position of honor in the world? Does all seem dark and uncertain before you? Do critics frown and cynics talk? "Look aloft" and be of firm heart! Remember "the darkest cloud has a silver lining," and you may yet attain a prominent place in the world's opinion.

Young woman, are you discouraged with the trials and temptations of this life? Perhaps you are unknown and have only *poverty* for a companion. God pity you! poor young heart! *I* know the longings, and aspirations, and murmurings that you know are wrong, and yet cannot help; *I* know how your soul beats against its prison bars until it almost seems that death is preferable to the struggle. *I* know that the beautiful world and blue sky, and shining stars seem a blank to you; *I* know how you waste the "midnight oil," poring over the "musty volume" till the "springs of life" are dried up; *I* know *all* this and knowing it, I ask, is there no bright spot on the fair earth. Look aloft! *There* is a friend who never faileth!

Widow! oh! the sorrow in that one word. The world is very dark to you! Thick tears fill your eyes until they are blinded to God's blessed sunshine, and you pray to die. But are there no bleeding hearts save yours? Think you no one else weeps? no one else mourns the precious dead? "Look aloft" to Him who promises to be a "Father to the fatherless."

Aged one! You whose sands of life are nearly run; your eyes are dim, your step faltering, and the frosts of many winters set upon your bowed head. You are alone! One by one your cherished companions have passed away. Look aloft to Him who will safely guide your trembling footsteps through the valley of the shadow of death.

Should the friend who, in our prosperity, wept when we wept, and joyed when we were glad—when adversity comes, betray us, let us look aloft to an unfailing friendship.

Should they who are nearest and dearest to our hearts pass beyond to the *Summer Land*, we will look aloft to you bright world where love never dies.

And oh! when Death halts at *our* door; when he points his finger to us and we must follow him across the dark river, we will look aloft and with faith in our hearts, fearlessly step into the cold waves.

Atchison, Kansas.

☞ FAME.—What duration do you expect for the immortal fame you would win—one, two, three or four thousand years? How many fames have survived the latter date?

SEA FOAM.

The sun is a golden goblet
Upslung by the reveller Day—
How the red wine glows and sparkles
As he reels on his bacchanal way!

And the mermaids rise to greet him
Up from their coral caves,
And they chant him a chant of welcome
That sounds like the plash of the waves.

They leave the mermen lonely
Far down in their dim sea hall,
And they fawn at the feet of the fair young Day,
Those fond mermaidens all.

Their passionate pale faces
Are upturned pleadingly,
And their floating tresses fall and rise
Wreathed with the foam o' the sea.

But wearied at last of wassail
The reveller sinks to sleep,
And the wine from the fallen goblet
Pours purple over the deep.

And lo! those sad mermaidens
Shriek out in wild despair,
And dash white breasts on the cruel rocks
Amid the breakers there.

Then up the mermen swarming
Laugh loud in scornful glee,
And hale the shining corses
Far out along the sea.

Their passionless pale faces
Are upturned mournfully,
And their trailing tresses fall and rise,
Floating like foam on the sea.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

A CHAT UPON SELF-CONTROL.

We can all preach upon self-control—can lecture by the hour upon its being an essential virtue, without which none of us can attain to grace of manner or expression—but when we come down to the level of facts:—

"Where is ours?"

Now this is a pregnant question to which few mortals possess the requisite knowledge to "make reply." For the most of us are but slaves to circumstances which in some instances become too strong for us to endure—and then our boasted self-control takes to itself wings, and leaves us to the mercy of our anger, scorn, etc.

Socrates seemed to possess this attribute in an astonishing degree—and yet we doubt not that there were seasons in his daily life when Xantippe could have told us that he was not invulnerable, and that she knew his weaknesses even if he were not aware of them.

There are times and seasons which come to all of us, when our will is not completely fashioned to our hands; and the restless passions of the mind hold us in sway—seasons when all of us do and say things which are unbecoming, unseemly, and which lower and debase us in the opinion of others, and also of ourselves.

We believe, however, that self-control is a virtue which will become ours if we cultivate it properly; if we strive right manfully for its possession; fight a bitter warfare against irritability, nervousness, jealousy, hatred, and all unkindness of heart and soul.

Our endeavors to possess this virtue may be aided by the following old recipe: Take of common sense, thirty grains; of decent behavior, one scruple; and of due consideration, ten grains. Mix well, and sprinkle the whole with *one moment's* thought.

Can be taken when any of the occasional symptoms appear.

It has been said that self-control is a physical impossibility to some persons, especially when they have not been educated to it.

The first clause of the statement we emphatically deny—but the latter we fully affirm; and as we have stated above—*it must be cultivated properly*. One exercise of it will not win for us the victory—but we must pile them mountain high before we can reach the highest which will bring repose—which will enable us to say to the raging waves of passion—"thus far canst thou come, and no farther."

It is most vexatious to be tormented without any reason by those who profess to love us—to be neglected by those who owe us attention, or to be imposed upon by those who have received many benefits at our hands.

And some one may ask—well why not let the irritation have its sway for a few moments—why not fret and fume, and scold and snap, and then let your mind settle down to repose?

Ah! friend, give way to the irritability of the moment—scold and snap—and where will you stop?

You will say things that you do not feel; unkind words which will cut keener than a knife; perhaps you will trample rough-shod upon the hearts of your children, your husband or wife, or your friends or servants, those whom you have sworn to cherish—to whom you owe the most sacred duties—whose example you should be.

They may forgive and forget it all, or thoughts of it may rankle in their breasts while their hearts continue to beat.

And have you obtained peace of mind? Are you contented with yourself?

No, indeed, you are bitterly ashamed of it, and if you are a sensible, right-minded person you will beg the pardon of those upon whom you have poured out the vials of your wrath.

You have not obtained the composure which you might expect from easing your mind, but have exhibited an irritable, excitable *ugly* temper—have made a childish show of yourself, and you are not excusable for so doing by either physical suffering, or nervous irritability. Self-control is within the reach of you and me—all of us can obtain it by a prayerful watchfulness over "the little foxes which devour the grapes" and ruin the fair prospect of fragrant and delicious fruit.

Little sins, little derelictions from duty, a little giving way to passion will surely lead to great results.

We must be faithful to ourselves; faithful in our watch and ward over tongue, eyes and hands, for

"When headstrong passion gets the reins of reason,
The force of nature, like too strong a gale,
For want of ballast, overacts the vessel."

And we are at the mercy of any one who chooses to put us in a rage, while even the brain may give way, and reason totter on its throne if we do not strive for the mastery of the sins which so easily beset us.

Let us therefore strive with prayer to One who was tempted as we are—who knows our sorrows and hath borne our griefs, and is ever ready to guard, guide and aid us in every right endeavor to win an immortal, never-fading crown.

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

☞ People who are foolish enough to risk their money in betting on horses should be taught caution by a witness at a recent trial of a horse case, in Springfield, Mass. The witness was a well-known horse trainer, and edified the Court with a description of how the best horses are made to come in last, and quoted a number of instances in which this method of cheating had been practised.

THE BIBLE:
Illustrated by Oriental Usages.

No. 33.

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

Raising Water with the Foot.

When Moses would describe the superiority of Canaan to the land of Egypt, he uses language that sounds quaint enough to our Western ears. He says:—"The land whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, * * * where thou sowedst thy seed, and *wateredst it with thy foot*, as a garden of herbs." He could not mean thus to institute a comparison between the two countries as to *fertility*, since Egypt has, with scarcely an exception, the most fruitful soil in the world; but he contrasts the different modes of *irrigation* that distinctively mark the countries referred to, and the labor required by each. Just think of watering all the broad acres of such a land as Egypt, as one would water the roses and lilies of a tiny parterre, or "a garden of herbs," where a few vegetables for the supply of a single household are grown. Yet so it was in "the land of bondage" whence the Israelites had just escaped—a land where rain seldom falls, where the thirsty earth is moistened by no refreshing dews, and the sole dependence for irrigation is upon the Nile, with its annual inundations, and the various canals, dykes and trenches, that, to be fully available, must be cleared out every year and thoroughly repaired. And though the annual overflow might ordinarily suffice for plantations bordering on the river, gardens and fields at a distance must every few days be provided with water; and for these the ancient Egyptians had a machine *worked by the foot*, which Philo, who lived in Egypt, describes as generally used by the peasantry. Niebuhr also mentions such a machine, which he supposes was in use in Moses' time, and as alluded to by him in the words quoted above.

This machine, still found among the Arabs, is called by them *Sakki-tdir-berdajel*, that is, a "hydraulic machine *worked by foot*." It is simply a wheel, moved by the motion of the feet, as the operator ascends successively the several steps within it, very much on the tread-mill order, while he maintains his position by means of the *hands*. After the water has been raised, it is turned into channels wherever wanted; and when one part of the ground is sufficiently watered, a laborer closes that channel by turning the earth against it *with his foot*, and at the same time opening a new channel by striking back again as before with his pedal extremities. It is quite probable that the working of these foot-machines, together with the digging and annual clearing out of the canals, formed a portion of the "hard bondage in mortar and brick" whereby the lives of the enslaved Jews were rendered so "bitter" under their Egyptian taskmasters; and hence they would naturally rejoice that their promised Canaan was a land of plenteous rains and refreshing dews—*watered of Heaven*, without the need of even voluntary toil at the hands of the dwellers therein. Herein lies the beauty of the comparison—obvious at first glance to an Oriental reader, but strangely enigmatical to us. In China and India, where an abundance of rain falls for about four months of every year, and none at all for the other eight, very similar machines are used for watering the lands during these seasons of long-continued drought. The one most common consists of a wooden trough, in which works an endless chain connected with paddles. This is placed at an angle of about forty degrees, with one end in the river or pond, the chain is moved by a tread-mill arrangement, and the water thus forced up the inclined plane. So general is the use of this machine and such numbers are brought into requisition, that there are both in China and India large manufactories devoted exclusively to their production.

From the peculiar configuration of the land in many portions of China, and the Celestial's singular ideas in regard to agriculture (as indeed in everything), the fields are usually laid off in a succession of terraces, in appearance not unlike a series of "gardens of herbs," and the water has to be raised from one to another, through the entire course of terraces. When a bed has received all the moisture it needs for the time, the entrance to the channel is blocked up with earth, *applied by the foot;* and when more water is needed, the earth is removed by the foot, in the same way. The *minuteness*, as well as the singularity of these gardening operations, always strikes a foreigner as more nearly allied to children's sports than real, efficient labor, but there is, after all, a perfect adaptation of the Oriental's mode of cultivating his fields, to the indolence of his nature, the enervating climate, and indeed all his surroundings.

One can scarcely doubt that the beautiful synonym, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and as the rivers of water, He turneth it whithersoever He will"—(Prov. xxi. 1) has reference to the gardener turning the little rills from channel to channel, at his own pleasure.

Touchingly it points to the perfect safety of the child of God, resting securely in the hands of his loving Father, even though his enemies may rage, and "the kings of the earth take counsel together" against him. Their hearts are in His hands, and even as the rivers are turned by the skilful husbandman, so may the wrath of the kings be changed to love and mercy at the behest of the all-powerful Jehovah.

Work and Trouble.

The world has been so often told that work is the best remedy for trouble that the saying sounds trite through much use; but though trite it remains true. "I should have died," a mother said lately, "when I lost my two children, but that the others were sick, and I hadn't a moment's leisure to realize how desolate I was." It is the fashion to pity a mourner because he or she has no time to grieve; but this very lack of time is often God's best medicine for the afflicted. The physician who goes home from his wife's funeral and has to make a half-dozen visits to patients in stages of disease too critical to be turned over to strange hands—the actor who sheds bitter tears over his child's grave, and then must go the same evening before the footlights—the wife who turns away from the sod that hides her very dearest, only to bake and brew and mend for her children, have all of them their cure, provided by destiny. It is the mourner who need *only* mourn who is to be pitied. Busy hands prepare food which he cannot eat—the wide, handsome rooms, through which he walks alone, are haunted—he need take no thought for the morrow, aye, but he takes all the more for yesterday. He has nothing which he *must* do, and therefore he gives himself up to longing, and disquiets his soul with memory. Pity him because he has no natural door of escape from the desolation of his own heart.

AT THE GARDEN GATE.

Somebody came to the garden gate,
While a soft hand trimmed the flowers;
And a blackbird piped to his listening mate
In a language as rich as ours.

Somebody blushed at the garden gate—
A blush that was fair to see;
And the sly sun peeped as he fain would wait,
And the blackbird paused on the tree.

Somebody spoke at the garden gate,
As the shadows began to fall;
And the rose looked up, though the hour was late,
And the peach blushed pink on the wall.

A sweet head fell at the garden gate,
On an arm that was strong and true;
And a chirrup of lips was heard to state
What words refused to do.

THE TIN-PEDDLER.

BY MABEL PERCY.

A pleasant sight to the New England housewife is the tin-peddler as he drives up to the door in his gayly-painted cart, with the inquiry, "Want any tin, marm?" and the complacent twinkle in his eyes, shows that he is sure of a welcome. Most peddlers are nuisances, particularly the German, who is always "six months from Shermany," but rather more in cheating and impudence. He gets used to being snubbed, and appears to like it; indeed he seems to think that you deserve pity for your lack of appreciation of his fine table linen, which he carries in a pack more bulky than himself, or his silks, shawls, &c., which he desires his waiter to bring in for your inspection, unheeding your emphatic declaration that you have no time to look at them. "*Six months from Shermany*," there is the packs, "*six years* and oftener less," there is the dashing span, waiter and all. But enough of him. The tin-peddler is always a Yankee, and although equally shrewd, his mind is too versatile to be bowed down to one idea. He is equally ready to *swap* horses or scuffle, and then he spends hours telling big stories, that somehow have a good many grains of sense, even if there is a deal of sifting before you get at them.

He begins with a fine red cart and an old horse, and he ends with a red cart and an old horse. The cart is always the same, and the wind and storms have just the contrary effect upon it that it does upon the driver, for while the cart loses color the peddler gains, so after all—it is nothing more nor less than a neat little business of profit and loss carried on by one individual. There is always the same garnishing of bags filled with wool and rags, while brooms and mop-handles bristle at the sides. The horse is always old, but it is a different one at each trip. He never seems to get any poorer nor any richer, although he is always shrewd, keen at a bargain, and a little given to cheating. But this the housewife shuts her eyes to when she sees the shining row of new tins which she gets in exchange for old rags, woollen and cotton, newspapers, beeswax, &c., which have long been in the way: and so as he deftly plies the scales and glibly announces the weight, she casts down her eyes so that he may not see that she suspects he is hardly accurate.

Generally, the tin-peddler is a tall, lank individual, with a narrow, consumptive chest, with *light* blue eyes and a complexion reddened by exposure. These are the genuine; but occasionally there comes to the door, with gentle tap, a gentlemanly individual, and you almost think he is a theological student, turned colporteur, instead of your cherished tin-peddler. But when you hear the bland inquiry, "Have you any rags to exchange for tin, madam?" you are delighted, thinking, now here is a chance to trade without getting cheated. But, alas, how often have we to realize that appearances are deceitful. As he departs with all your stores of rags, leaving only a few pieces of tin, and of poor quality, you sit and muse over the delinquencies of men, particularly of tin-peddlers not of the genuine sort, which these are not, I assure you, being generally importations from the Western States.

The true tin-peddler is the long, lean, consumptive Yankee, who swaps horses, trades jack-knives, has a little tin trunk of needles, combs, scissors, &c., who stops to look at the crops, makes himself perfectly at home wherever he is, pries into family affairs, has a remedy for every ail that man is heir to, and drives up to the door and inquires, "Want any tin, marm?" Trust none others. They are impostors.

A Man Richer than Rothschild.

When people talk about millionaires they usually mention Rothschild first, but there is a man in England by the name of Ward, in comparison with whom any Rothschild is a pauper. This man Ward inherits a vast property, accumulated investments and estates, which give him an enormous income; he has the most magnificent house in London, the finest collection of art, and the finest country-seats in the kingdom; his wife is celebrated for her beauty, and her display of diamonds at the recent festival given by the Emperor of Austria, in Vienna, made all the other ladies, the empresses, queens and princesses, look poor. What the income of this British Cræsus is we do not know, but a Manchester paper gives an account of his annual profits derived from his coal mines, which amount to the enormous sum of £4,000,000. So the income from one source alone of this inordinately wealthy person is not much short of $25,000,000 a year.

A Somnambulist.

Somnambulists often get themselves into unpleasant scrapes, but seldom into a less enviable one than was achieved by a student of the French College of Ste. Barbe. Being missed by his room-mate in the night, and his partiality to this kind of exercise being known, search was instantly made for him, with the result of finding him comfortably reposing in the gutter on the roof, four stories from the ground, and with one leg dangling over the edge. The morning bell was about to ring, the noise would surely awaken him, and only the courage and presence of mind of one of the ushers saved the luckless sleep-walker from a cruel death. First directing the students to pile their mattresses in the court-yard beneath the spot where the sleeper lay, the brave usher slid down the gable roof, at imminent risk of going over, cautiously awoke the slumbering boy, and dragged him back into safety. It is pleasant to read that this gallant exploit was rewarded by a commemorative silver medal, purchased by subscription among the students, and a more solid, but possibly less gratifying testimonial among the faculty.

☞ Compare what you have done with what you might have done.

☞ A mother has no right to bring up a daughter without teaching her how to keep house, and, if she has an intelligent regard for her daughter's happiness, she will pay her particular attention in this respect.

A GOOD FELLOW!

BY GLEN CAROL.

Were I a man, I should prefer to be recognized among my associates by almost any other title than that of "a good fellow." The very phrase is significant of *insignificance*, and defines the individual's character more perfectly than would a many-worded description. To scatter, broadcast, among chance acquaintances and strangers the earnings—hardly or easily won, as the case may be—that should be used for the benefit of himself, or those at home, whom he is supposed to protect and care for; to yield to the tempter against his better judgment, perhaps inclination; to take, upon invitation, "just one more glass," though his face be flushed and his step already uncertain; to squander, with reckless prodigality, opportunities which to the deserving oftentimes never present themselves; to be hand and glove with every one—at least every one whose friendship is a questionable acquisition; to make it a point of never saying "No;" to be a spendthrift all his days, and maybe at the last a pauper; to wring the hearts of those who love him best; to wreck, irrevocably, his own life, and darken the lives of others—*this* is to be "a good fellow!"

It is a high price to pay for admittance through a gate which opens widely that you may enter, but through whose portals you may not pass returning. It is a hard way—despite its easiness—to win friends. Is it worth while to buy the good-will of the world at the world's own price? Or to lose your own self-respect in the wearing of the expressive title—"a good fellow?"

THE CLOUD.

A cloud came over a land of leaves
(O hush, little leaves, lest it pass you by!)
How they had waited and watch'd for the rain,
Mountain and valley, and vineyard and plain,
With never a sign from the sky!
Day after day had the pitiless sun
Look'd down with a lidless eye.

But now! On a sudden a whisper went
Through the topmost twigs of the poplar-spire;
Out of the east a light wind blew
(All the leaves trembled, and murmur'd, and drew
Hope to the help of desire.)
It stirred the faint pulse of the forest-tree,
And breathed through the brake and the brier.

Slowly the cloud came: then the wind died,
Dumb lay the land in its hot suspense:
The thrush on the elm-bough suddenly stopped,
The weather-warn'd swallow in mid-flying dropped,
The linnet ceased song in the fence,
Mute the cloud moved, till it hung overhead,
Heavy, big-bosomed and dense.

Ah, the cool rush through the dry-tongued trees,
The patter and plash on the thirsty earth,
The eager bubbling of runnel and rill,
The leaping of leaves that have drunk their fill,
The freshness that follows the dearth!
New life for the woodland, the vineyard, the vale,
Now life with the world's new birth!

Without Prejudice.

Oh, what it is to be a lawyer's clerk! Owing to the acuteness learned in this high position a young Englishman has been actually enabled to escape unscathed from that dangerous affair, a breach of promise suit. He had paid his addresses chiefly by letter, and in the most tender and poetic strain, to a pretty girl, who, when his affection grew less, was too prudent and energetic not to demand golden comfort for her wounded heart. Her lawyer heard her case with pleasant anticipations of damages; but alas! when he examined the love letters of the lawyer's clerk he found his client was put by them entirely out of court. The ingenious young man had invariably signed himself, "Believe me, my own dearest, divinest, duckiest Angelina, your fondest, most devoted (but without prejudice) Tommy." The legal phrase, which the gentle Angelina didn't understand, had saved him.

REGULARLY every two weeks, for the past six years, a letter has been received at the post-office in Manchester, N. H., addressed to Dr. ——, evidently by the same hand. The calligraphy is good, and is evidently that of a lady. The name is entered on the list, time after time, and no one has ever claimed one of them. After lying at the office the time specified by law, the letters are sent, one after the other, to the dead-letter office at Washington. On one occasion one of the letters was returned from the dead-letter office, because it contained some trifle of lace, which the department was desirous should be returned to the writer. The letter gave no clew as to who or what the writer was, and was signed simply "Emeline." This name was entered on the list, but no one ever claimed the letter or the bits of lace. Another strange feature of this case is that the "oldest inhabitant" has never heard of any man of the name the letters bear, and so the whole matter remains a mystery, year after year.

Humor of the Graveyard.

A stonecutter received the following epitaph from a German, to be cut on the tombstone of his wife:—

"Mine vife Susan is dead, if she had life till nex friday she'd bin dead shust two weeks. As a tree falls so must it stan, all tings is impossible mit God."

Any one who visits Childwald, England, can read in the cemetery there, the following epitaph:

"Here lies me, and my three daughters,
Brought here by using Sedlitz waters.
If we had stuck to Epsom salts,
We wouldn't have been in these here vaults."

The following lines are said to have been copied from a stone in Oxford, New Hampshire:

"To all my friends I bid adieu,
A more sudden death you never knew.
As I was leading the old mare to drink,
She kicked, and killed me quicker'n a wink."

On a tombstone in South Carolina is the following beautiful tribute to departed worth:

"Here lies the boddy of Robert Gordin,
Mouth almighty, and teeth ackordin.
Stranger tread lightly over this wonder,
If he opens his mouth, you are gone by thunder."

An inscription on a monument in East Tennessee, winds up with the following touching obituary:

"She lived a life of virtue, and died of the cholera morbus, caused by eating green fruit, in the hope of a blessed immortality, at the early age of 21 years, 7 months and 16 days! Reader, 'Go thou and do likewise.'"

In a town in Connecticut a man died, who had a large wen on the top of his head, and his tombstone bore the following tribute to his memory, and also to the wen:

"Our father lies beneath the sod,
His spirit's gone unto his God,
We never more shall hear his tread,
Nor see the wen upon his head."

Robert Kemp ordered the following lines to be placed on the tombstone of his beloved partner:

"She once was mine,
But now, oh, Lord,
I her to Thee resign,
and remain your obedient, humble servant,
ROBERT KEMP."

A CALL IN A NUTSHELL.

"I heard it!"
"Who told you?"
"Her friend"(!)
"You don't say?"
"'Tis dreadful!"
"Yes, awful!"
"Don't tell it, I pray!"

"Good gracious!"
"Who'd think it?"
"Well! Well! Well!"
"Dear me!"
"I've had my
Suspicions!"
"And I too, you see!"

"Lord help us!"
"Poor creature!"
"So artful!"
"So sly!"
"No beauty!"
"Quite thirty!"
"Between you and I!"

"I'm going!"
"Don't; stay, love!"
"I can't!"
"I'm forlorn!"
"Farewell, dear!"
"Good-by, sweet!"
"I'M GLAD SHE'S GONE!"

THE MYSTERY OF TRENDLEDEEP MANOR.

BY PERCY B. ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER XXV.

AT THE RED LION.

The exigencies of our narrative require one short retrospection.

The life at the manor-house of Trendledeep was a strange medley after the departure of Lucy. Her husband remained ill so long that the medical men were in nowise astonished that his recovery, which did not take place even partially for years, should be marked by a great and painful change in his appearance and manner.

He was moody, silent and suspicious, while his face was gaunt, his eyes suspiciously averse to meet those of others; no society was now welcome, not even the clergyman of the district being received.

Mr. Mordaunt appeared to retire wholly into himself, with no companion save his ex-tutor and present steward, whose presence, however, appeared rather to be suffered than welcomed.

They took their meals together, they rode together, they spent long hours in the library: but for all this there was no cordiality between them. Once or twice, even, there appeared on the part of Mr. Mordaunt a desire to escape from the companionship of this newly-arrived personage.

Mr. Silas Regan, as before told, had come during the early days of the long illness which had prostrated the new master of the Trendledeep manor, and had at once obtained an ascendancy over his employer which could only be explained by the state of his health.

Mr. Silas Regan slept in a room adjacent to that of Mr. Mordaunt, who occupied, without a thought, it seemed, of her who was gone, the apartment which had been once theirs conjointly.

Now it happened that about a month after the master of the house recovered from his illness, and a week after the personal conflict which Lucy had witnessed between the master and steward, that one morning, at gray of dawn, the door of the state bed-chamber opened, and Mr. Mordaunt peered out. He was quite dressed, as if for a journey. He was provided with a small carpet-bag and a stick.

Not a sound.

He stepped out into the passage, and, as he did so, a sarcastic voice addressed him.

"Quite ready?" said the speaker.

Mr. Mordaunt turned round and saw by his side his steward, who was dressed, and also provided with a stout walking-stick.

"What for? Cannot I go forth alone, sir?"

"No! except in search of the rightful owner of this house. When you are ready for that, I am. You know best in what secluded nook, in what hole the body lies. Show it me, and I will guide the officers of justice."

"There has been no murder done," faltered the other, in a strangely altered tone.

"You can easily, then, satisfy the minions of the law," continued the other.

"I will go back to my room."

"And hearkʼee, Mr. Mordaunt. You are sole master of this house, of this vast property, by some foul play or other, as you know. So let it be distinctly understood that, once you separate yourself from me, I put in motion the suspicious eyes of justice. But as long as we are inseparable, and my thousand a year is paid, I am silent as the grave—silent as the fish-pond to which the other day you tried to consign me."

The other shuddered.

"Yes—as the grave! I am not anxious to know your secret—I do not care to know it. All that is needful I am already aware of, and that is—you hold this place by the tenure of crime, and that I, without being your accomplice, mean to enjoy a portion of the reward, and so good morning, Mr. Mordaunt."

The latter made no reply, but went into his room, slamming and bolting his door with a strange, baleful light in his eyes, which Mr. Silas Regan might not have liked to see. Decidedly the character of Mr. Mordaunt had fearfully changed since he had come into possession of his property.

The next day not an allusion was made to the conversation of the preceding one. The master of the house appeared to abandon all idea of his contemplated journey, while the steward was as silent, as devoted to the interests of the family as ever. Under his skilful hands, tenants were kept strictly up to the mark, not one being allowed to fall the least into arrear.

But it was quite evident to any one who was acquainted with the Mordaunts that all this stillness and quietness boded no good. Mr. Silas Regan appeared fully aware of this fact, and therefore kept a strict eye upon his employer.

Thus passed six months or more, when Mr. Mordaunt suddenly announced his intention of shutting up his house and going abroad.

He and Mr. Silas Regan had several long and animated discussions on the subject, the nature of which, however, could only be conjectured.

The matter was at length decided by the steward being installed ruler over the whole estate during the absence of the melancholy and miserly master, who so arranged his affairs before his departure that Mr. Silas Regan was compelled to invest every penny he received from the estate for the benefit of Hubert Treherne Mordaunt, his heirs and assigns, except three thousand the other drew of him during his travels, and one thousand which was paid himself—Silas Regan—as a salary.

And so the master left the old home of the Mordaunts to strangers.

Silas Regan, soon after the departure of the real owner of the mansion, shut it up, and walked off to London, making, however, arrangements for his periodical return whenever audit-day came round.

Now we must describe the manner of Silas, for it was peculiar. Every half-year he sent a circular to each tenant, informing him that on such a day and such an hour he should be at the Red Lion—John Bliss owner—and that all tenants prepared with their rents would there receive their receipts.

Defaulting tenants were requested not to attend, as the law would deal at once with them in a summary manner.

Devonshire farms, though not exempt from the accidents that others are liable to, are, as a rule, tolerably sure and productive. The tenants, though sighing over the old days, when every fair latitude was given, contrived to pay, and after the first attempt, never ventured to discuss any matter with the imperturbable steward.

And so it went on for many years; then came a change.

He came to the inn at eleven o'clock, lunched, and afterward entered the audit-room at twelve. Tall as one of the Mordaunts, thin and gaunt, his body was ever closely wrapped in a large overcoat, while his eyes were protected by huge green spectacles. He never took off his broad-brimmed hat, but sat, ledger in hand, almost immovable and nearly speechless.

His manner was most offensively cool, as had always been the case.

Every complaint he entered without remark in his book, but with this counter-irritating fact; if it were a matter of importance, it was not attended to.

The audits were in spring and autumn.

Lucy had fled from the home of which she had been the light and sunshine many years, when an audit-day came round. Not a tenant thought of missing the day.

The Red Lion was in a central situation on the road to Plymouth. It had once been a miller's, and about ten yards behind the modern habitation was the mill-house, shorn, however, of its wings, and in every way indicating that it had retired from business.

A brawling brook, deep, full of fish, and tolerably picturesque, seemed to indicate that once the mill might have moved by water power, as did that three miles distant, which had taken the place of the one moved by wind.

This mill-house was not, however, ruined. The enterprising owner had turned the space about it into a pleasure-ground, where the neighbors came to enjoy themselves in the summer months, taking tea in that which now was the arbor, and which had been the lower part of the mill-house.

Here it was that the audit was held.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THREE STRANGE VISITORS.

It was the night before the audit, and John Harrup Bliss, the jovial landlord of the Red Lion, had made every preparation for the morrow. Despite the odd ways of the steward and manager, the tenants had their semi-annual feed, from which, however, both landlord and manager were absent.

But, their money paid and the receipts in their pockets, the good farmers took no further note of a churlish landed proprietor and his still more case-hardened steward, but just enjoyed themselves in their own way.

John Bliss had given out all his orders—being, for a wonder, master in his own house—to a meek-looking and soft-spoken better-half, and John Bliss felt comfortable—as, about nine in the evening, he stood upon his doorstep, smoking a long pipe, preparatory to taking his supper.

The house was, for a great wonder, empty. There had been none but drovers there that evening, his regular customers being called away by some town merry-making or other, of which the landlord would, if asked any questions thereupon, have highly disapproved.

He stood upon his step, ruminating whether to shut up the house at that comparatively early hour, or to allow the doctrine of chances to have sway, and await the course of events.

He was still wrapped in deep thought when the sound of a horse, urged at rather an immoderate speed, fell upon his ear.

All his tradesman's instincts were aroused at once, and he only smoked the harder.

The night was gray, not dark; there was no moon and few stars, these being obscured by rapid clouds, that scoured over the face of the heavens with all the steady rapidity which is given by a north-west wind.

The rider of the steed pulled up abruptly at the door. He was wrapped in what is called a mackintosh, wore a heavily-slouched hat, and a thick comforter, which almost wholly concealed the lower part of his features.

"Supper, in a private room, and a bed," he said, in a harsh voice.

"Certainly, sir," replied John Bliss, who had the true landlord respect for appearances.

The rider made no reply, but casting the bridle of his nag to the obsequious hostler, strode into the house, where, the host having given the necessary orders, the kitchen folk were soon at work on the necessary ingredients for a roadside meal.

Then John returned to his post, in the vague hope that something else might turn up.

He was right.

Ten minutes later another traveller, more carefully wrapped up than the previous one, riding a far inferior horse, wearing perhaps less useful and good-looking clothes, rode up upon a small but active cob, and made precisely the same demand as the first-comer.

John was cosmopolitan. Nothing moved, nothing astonished him, and he withdrew like a snail into his shell, to give the necessary orders to have this customer attended to.

The first-comer had been very silent, saying nothing more than was absolutely necessary; the present arrival was even more taciturn.

"Bed—supper—room to myself," was his remark.

Like the other traveller, he was tall and somewhat gaunt and thin; but his voice had a totally different ring in it. It was, perhaps, nearly as harsh as the other, but then it was the harshness of either deep thought or sadness, with, however, the true tone at bottom.

John Bliss looked at him.

"Private rooms ain't much the go at the Red Lion," he said; "but if you like to sup in your bed-chamber, sir, you can have every accommodation."

"Cleanliness—comfort—privacy," replied the other, in a tone of utter weariness.

"All that, sir," responded John, and led the way once more to the interior of the house.

This time, he never knew why, but governed by some feeling of sympathy, he saw himself to the comforts of his visitor. The room, which was to combine all the comforts which he had promised, was seldom used except by some wandering commercial of more than usual pretensions, who considered himself a very much bigger man than the house he represented.

It was a large room with a big chimney, and a huge bed, and a window that overlooked the mill-house. With care it was soon made comfortable, and though the night was by no means cold, John Bliss left his guest sitting over the fire, warming his hands mechanically by a blaze which looked perhaps more cheerful than it felt.

The thermometer of a landlord is success, and though the owner of the red beast rampant would never be practically either more comfortable or happier for the presence of his unexpected guests, the feeling that he was making money was satisfactory in itself—and before resigning himself to his comfortable meal, he again went to his front door, to peep out at the gloomy night.

This time he may be forgiven for exhibiting some astonishment, as he found a postchaise just drawn up, and heard a lady's voice—a lady can be told in the dark at any moment by the tones she makes use of—asking if she could be accommodated with exclusive apartments.

The Red Lion was not an hotel—was seldom used as one—and this was taxing its requirements to the utmost; but John Harrup Bliss on this trying occasion was equal to the emergency.

The picturesque mill was in sight.

"My rooms are full," he said with a low bow, "but there is a most engaging chamber in what we call the ruin. Gentlemen as come fishing choose it—clean sheets, warm fire!"

"The very thing," replied the lady, dreamily. "So your house is full?"

"So to speak. Not a room fit for a lady left," continued the reticent host, not wishing to expose his limited accommodation.

He now hastened to assist the driver of the Plymouth fly to remove a small carpet-bag from the vehicle, and then bowed the lady into his own bar-parlor, while he gave directions.

Mrs. Bliss, mild and inoffensive as she was, rather showed her surprise at this state of things—but John, in a voice that seemed to indicate astonishment at nothing, ordered the "ruin" chamber to be prepared as rapidly as possible—while with a kind of rough politeness, which had often been fully appreciated, he bade his wife give the lady supper there and then.

This the traveller accepted. She had made a long journey, she said, and was both tired and in want of refreshments. She had only had a cup of tea since she left London, a statement which startled Jane Bliss into unusual activity.

And so the strange lady supped with the landlord and landlady of the house, a fact which, if she were an old traveller, she must have duly appreciated.

Having to cross a garden at night, she did not lay aside her garments, but both John and Jane saw quite enough to be aware that they were entertaining a true lady, young and beautiful despite her rather extraordinary sadness.

Mrs. Bliss happened to allude to the audit of the next day.

"The Mordaunts of the Deep?" said the lady, speaking with affected carelessness.

"Yes."

"Does Mr. Mordaunt usually attend the audit?"

"Never."

"And yet I thought he came before me on horseback," responded the lady, as if speaking to herself.

Both John and Jane stared.

"Oh, no! good lady," said John, with a good-humored smile; "I should know my own landlord. The Red Lion has been in the Mordaunt family two hundred years—and will be two hundred more I hope."

"I thought the name was Treherne," observed the lady, sipping a glass of wine.

"It was," said John, earnestly; "the money was left to a Miss Mordaunt—who married Hubert Treherne, a fine, manly, glorious fellow, as everybody loved—until she deserted him."

"But, what difference did that make?" asked the female guest.

"Difference!" cried John—and then he lowered his voice to a whisper—"as happy a couple as ever lived but she must have been mad to leave him. A year they were happy—and then, while he was away on business, she ran away. He never was the same—mind I say nothing; but the saying is as he went mad, and it do look uncommon like it—stark staring mad, fit to have a keeper."

"But the name."

"Afore she left he'd asked to take her name, and the Royal permission was given," continued the landlord; "but what made you think he'd have come here, I can't tell. Mr. Mordaunt is away abroad—never comes here. Mark me—though I say it as shouldn't say it—he's something on his mind. Perhaps she know'd that. If so, she was right to go—and yet it's wonderful what a woman can do to tame a man. Can't they, Jane?"

"I really cannot say," responded his wife, mildly, "as I never tried. My experience—"

"There! there! don't persuade the lady you are as bad as the rest. Let me speak for you. Yes, I can say it, a better wife never lived, ma'am, and one more reasonable."

"Always let you have your own way, John, you mean."

"And are happy for it. I am, I know. Some men, lady, bear governing; others don't. I'm of the last sort. But I must see to your bedroom."

"The best of husbands, lady," said Jane, with a smile, when John had left. "I could have my own way in everything, if I plucked up a will; but what is the use? John is always right."

The lady looked at her with a strangely puzzled look. Such humility on the part of a wife appeared almost unnatural, and she had a great mind to say so. But she wisely restrained herself, as all should when they run the risk of disturbing genuine happiness.

"I am very tired," she said, instead, "and should be glad to take my breakfast in bed. I will not rise until late."

"Your wishes shall be obeyed in everything," responded the worthy woman.

With this her husband returned, bringing a stout, rosy lass to show the stranger to her room.

The night by this time had become dark, and the strange lady was obliged to follow the steps of the girl, guided by a lantern, which enabled her to ascend a rather steep staircase, to what proved one of the most comfortable and cosey of rooms.

A warm fire and comfortable bed appeared welcome indeed, but the lady did not retire for hours.

She stood at the window, looking across at the inn in the direction where slept the other travellers for some time; but at last, as if weariness had overtaken her, resolved to rest.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHAT IS IT?

It was long past the ordinary time for rising in that part of England when the stout Devonshire lass took breakfast to the lady. She had wished not to be disturbed, and did not pull open her curtains until ten, when at once she was waited on.

The girl brought every kind of refreshment which she considered desirable, and then lingered somewhat.

The lady noticed this.

"I shall not want anything more."

But the girl wanted to know of her requirements about dinner.

The lady smiled, and said that rest and quiet was all she required—if they would be kind enough to leave her until evening.

Then the audit in the big room of the old mill would not disturb her?

Oh, no! she should lie down all day, as her eyes were sore with travelling.

This assurance appeared wholly to satisfy the girl, who went away, and reported the success of her message.

The lady, however, appeared nowise desirous of again seeking her bed.

She breakfasted, dressed herself slowly, and stood for some time looking at herself in the glass.

It was a beautiful face that was reflected there, a firm face, too, as of one who could be determined in any case; the expression was rather sad, however, now than angry or fierce.

"Why is that good but commonplace woman over the way so happy?" she murmured to herself. "Because she is gentle and yielding. Heavens, if I have made a mistake—if I might have been happy—if I have acted under a wild and irrepressible impulse—if—if— But no; I heard with my own ears—I saw with my own eyes—what more can I seek to know?"

She went on dressing.

"I must be firm as a rock—and yet that man chilled me to the marrow of my bones. Mad—if that were the meaning of the hints and warnings I received, what have I done? Cast a fellow-creature into the abyss—from which all retreat is worse than death. If so, Heaven forgive me!"

The lady strove to drown thought by taking up a book. In vain. The mind is not to be tricked or overcome by fanciful expedients. Dwell on the one subject uppermost in her thoughts she must, or die in the attempted resistance.

And then she heard a noise below.

We have said that her bedroom in the old mill ruin, was above the apartment which had been turned into a kind of rural dining-hall. The stairs opened into the room by means of a trap-door, which was wide open, but which could at any moment be closed.

The lady seated herself on a stool commanding a complete view of the scene below. A man who had looked up, however, had scarcely seen her, for the room below was dark and gloomy when not illuminated by a number of wax tapers, and of her own chamber she had closed the curtains.

She looked down drawing a long breath and clasping her hands upon her knees.

The room contained a large table, at one end of which was an arm-chair, while round about were chairs and stools of a more humble character.

No other furniture.

But at the moment her vision took in the scene a man stood in the apartment, wrapped in a heavy cloak and shrouded by a slouched hat, who walked up and down slowly. In one corner was a hole leading to a cellar. This the man looked at for some time, and then with downcast eyes, descended the steps leading to the old mill vaults.

His step was heavy and uncertain, his face pallid, his eyes wandering and restless, but to the thinking of this woman who looked on, more affected by drink than hallucination.

And to her drink, though madness, was a madness without an excuse.

She rose impatiently, as if undecided what to do, and moved slowly across the room, veiling her eyes with her long, white, taper fingers.

Another sound drew her attention.

When she looked again, she saw that a man of very different appearance, as she thought, stood near the chairs; he had a large book in his hand, which he opened and placed upon the table.

He then put pen, ink and loose papers beside it—and seated himself.

He was evidently deeply absorbed in earnest and anxious thought.

The lady from this moment appeared to herself afterward to have lived in a dream, for from the moment another actor appeared upon the scene, she appeared to be spell-bound.

The door leading from the yard slowly opened, and gave passage to a person dressed very much like the one in the vaults, but rather more bowed and old in appearance.

The man at the desk raised his eyes, and would have leaped from his seat; but the other bounded close to him, rested a heavy hand upon his shoulder, and held him down.

"Wretch!—villain!—foul impostor!—aider and abettor in murder!" he said, "and have I found you at last?"

"My name," replied the other, with a calmness which was assumed more in terror than anything else, "is Silas Regan. I have never been accused of the crimes you allude to."

"Man, did you not aid and abet the most cruel and foul imposture?"

"Sir, in the first place, I know you not; in the second, I have business to transact with the tenants of Mr. Hubert Treherne Mordaunt, whose agent I am. If you really have business with me, speak to me after the audit."

The other looked keenly at him, and without speaking, walked once or twice up and down the room.

"Well, well," he said, at last, "an hour is but a little time to wait for vengeance. Proceed with your business."

And the lady, whose eyes were dim from emotions she could not control, saw not how he took his departure. She had been compelled to rise and breathe the air of the window, which was open, though the blinds were closed.

Then she saw the man in spectacles and broad-brimmed hat bend over his book, and look at one or two items, making entries with a ready pen.

This done, he leaned back in his chair.

As he did so, she saw a man appear from directly behind him—*the* man, in fact—and pass his hand slowly over his face.

What he really did she could never tell.

The agent, the steward, whose name was Silas Regan, never moved for a moment, and then the other lifted him up and led him, without the slightest resistance, to the staircase leading to the vaults below.

She held her breath. All that passed was so dreamy, inexplicable, so utterly without meaning, that the chief sensation that came over her was vague curiosity.

After the lapse of ten minutes, the chair was again filled. The man sat, with his cloak, and broad hat, and spectacles, peering into the book with the old greedy look, and making entries as before.

Some tenants entered, and in a half-respectful, half-surly way, made payments. The sums were entered in the book slowly and methodically, and the receipts, all ready written, handed to them.

Scarcely a word was spoken, and when the steward did open his mouth, it was in a surly, growling tone that admitted of little reply.

Thus a whole hour passed, during which the lady sat, her hands clasped over her knees, her eyes fixed vacantly below, no sense, to all appearance, awake but that of sight.

Then the man slowly bowed them out of the room, and resumed his seat.

He had placed all the money in a bag beside the book, but was in no hurry to take it up.

At this moment the man who had already demanded an explanation entered the room.

"Have you done? Can you speak to me now?" he said, in a sarcastic voice, while he took up the bag and put it in his pocket.

The man cowered in his chair, and seemed to sink into himself.

"Mr. Silas Regan," continued the other, "will you condescend to enter into an explanation with me alone, or shall I summon such of the tenants as are constables?"

The man rose, with his back turned to the lady, whom all, however, have recognized as Lucy, and took off his hat and spectacles.

"Call them in! call a hundred constables," he laughed. "There is need of all to seize a murderer. Why do you not shout—or shall I?" the other hissed, in an unnatural voice, as he clutched the first speaker's arm. "He is murdered—his body is easily to be found—and who but you can have done it?"

The first speaker shook him off, stepped back, and putting his hand before his eyes as if to cry "Avaunt!" to a phantom, went out backward.

"Horror! horror!" he cried, as he did so. "Blood! nothing but blood! The curse is upon our wretched race."

And he left the mill-house, mounted a horse that was outside, and rode away.

The other man slowly put on his hat, spectacles and cloak, shut up his book, and walked with the utmost coolness to the cellar.

From this he soon emerged with the body of the steward, or what appeared his body, and seated it, spectacles, hat, cloak and all, in the arm-chair, after which he also left, but did not go back to the inn, gliding away by a small copse near the river, at the back of the mill-house.

The lady was found asleep—in a stupefied sleep—after the people of the house had discovered the steward stone-dead in his chair, having died, to all appearance, of apoplexy.

But all his money was gone; and the doctors, on examination, found that he had been killed in a way that, but for the suspicion excited, might never have been found out.

A long, thin wire, or needle, had been run into his heart.

The strange lady was too ill from the fatigue of her journey to give any account of noises or conversations she had heard. By a merciful dispensation she had no memory of what had passed, until a long time afterward.

And so a verdict of wilful murder was brought against some person or persons unknown, the chief inducement being to steal the large sum which had been taken on that audit-day.

Though every effort was made to trace the murderer, no clue could be found to the guilty personage.

Mr. Mordaunt wrote from Italy to his solicitors to act as stewards for the future, until his return.

The tenants gained considerably by the change; but ever, on audit-day, the strange, inexplicable murder in the old mill-house would recur to their memories.

The innkeeper always suspected one of his strange guests; in fact, he had vague notions that all three were mixed up in it, though his wife, on this point, ventured to contradict him.

"The men were mysterious, and all that," she cried, "and I have no doubt were thieves and murderers, but the lady was a real lady, and no one shall ever convince me to the contrary."

"Who lives longest shall see the most," was the landlord's reply. "It's quite certain the poor gentleman was murdered, and that they walked off with the money!"

There was no gainsaying this, and so the event became first a nine days' wonder, and then faded out of memory of all save John Bliss and Jane, who many years after lived to tell the tale.

And now to return to the thread of our narrative.

The good-natured Captain Arundell found his patience sorely tried with his young friend's lamentations at the sudden loss of his young divinity, the more that within his own heart was a regret as sad and profound as the other's. Eighteen is not always the age of false emotions—as a rule, youth is as sincere, and truthful, and genuine as old age is false, cruel and selfish. The approach to the grave too often narrows the views, and centres them all upon self.

There is little time left, and that is devoted to the one being chiefly thought of—in vulgar parlance, number one.

Cecil Mordaunt, impulsive, hasty, and not without faults, was possessed of a true and genial heart, full of tender sympathies, which were readily lavished upon those who were kind to him.

He looked up to and respected his father, he loved his mother, he adored Maud Meriton.

The mere fact of her disappearance only added to his passion.

Never for a moment did he suspect that Captain Arundell was his unconscious and unwilling rival. He was happy in his devoted and unselfish love.

Again, he was almost expected to keep it all secret, as a feeling which a father did not approve of, leading him to adopt the violent measure of leaving an abode in which he had resided for years.

Captain Arundell alone remained. In his eyes, he was, as it were, a kind of scapegoat, and as he was good-natured, he had no mean share of the cornet's confidence.

But talking did not bring back the lost one, and when weeks passed without seeing her who was the one thought of his existence, Cecil became moody, thoughtful and totally unfit for society. He had no ideas beyond her who was gone. He could neither play whist nor billiards, nor even enjoy his ride.

In this difficulty Captain Arundell thought the best plan would be to take him off at once for a trip to Brighton.

The baronet and his wife were again there, and only too glad to see their son, especially in the society of one whom the father of the youth regarded with no mean affection.

He could not explain what feelings were uppermost when he looked at him, but there was something independent of his manly character, of his undoubted honor and gentlemanliness, which caught the baronet's fancy.

Despite his wild and unsatisfactory youth, the man had some small remnant of a heart.

Above all, his strongest affections were fixed upon Cecil, who was his heir, the successor of his title and estates. It was hard to say who was most attached to the boy, the mother or the father.

The young guardsman took up his abode at the same hotel with his parents, but in separate apartments, that he might have the freedom of a young bachelor; but except Captain Arundell he had no particular acquaintances that he cared about.

He little imagined the trial to which he was soon to be put.

Both Sir Vincent Mordaunt and Lady Blanche were bent on his marrying early.

This was a circumstance of which he was wholly ignorant, not even suspecting the powerful reasons which impelled them in that direction.

In the father they were twofold, an anxious desire to keep him from those trials which had embittered his own youth, and a laudable wish to see the future heir of his title and estates during his lifetime.

The mother was actuated by the usual female propensity to encourage matrimony, while she firmly believed early marriages were conducive to the happiness of all parties.

Unless early marriages are more than ordinarily imprudent, she was right.

There are a thousand reasons in their favor.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SECRET OF THE PRISON-HOUSE.

It would have been hard for any man who had known the Sir Vincent Mordaunt of the past, to recognize him in the portly gentleman, who, rich and respected, with a wife still beautiful, was now to be met in the centre of the best society.

With his early necessities he had dropped his early vices, and, turning to politics and the higher regions of the turf, had become quite a man of fashion. Few persons, if any, remembered the errors of his youth, though, unfortunately, people are too apt to rake some forgotten scandal when any one in after-life takes up a position of note.

There was one thing more than anything that had served to change the character of the sporting baronet. His wife was essentially a good woman, despite her worldly mother, and had used the birth of her only son to mould her husband into what he now was.

They sat at breakfast. Cecil, recovered from his fall, was lounging on the beach.

On any other occasion, he would have been at a billiard-room, or up at the barracks, or riding, or something; but now he was simply lounging, as if in deep thought, looking far more at the rolling sea than at the passers-by.

He had posted himself near a seat, but without sitting down, using his cane listlessly to dash aside the loose stones which abounded under his feet.

"Cecil seems to have grown wonderfully manly and thoughtful," said the baronet, "since his unfortunate accident."

"Well, he is changed," replied Lady Blanche, who, though she had a faint suspicion of the cause, would say nothing about it; "the fact is, that I think he wants more serious occupation for his mind. I fancy the rather flimsy life of a guardsman does not quite satisfy him. He wants something to look forward to."

"The deuce he does! You do not mean the baronetcy, Blanche?" cried the other, with a grim attempt at a smile.

"Oh, no! Cecil is a good son—the soul of truth and honor. I do not mean to convey the idea that he knows what he wants. I think, however, if we were to engage him to be married—"

"Marry a boy of nineteen?"

"By no means! All I wish is to see him select a future wife—his whole happiness in life will depend on that. You know I approve of early marriages."

A faint color suffused the whole countenance of the baronet as he turned thoughtfully away.

"I have for two years cast my eyes around in search of one who might suit him, and my selection is made. In all my experience, none ever came up to Kate Mowbray in perfection."

"Lord Lovell's daughter?"

"Yes. Her beauty is classical and pure. Every womanly charm is hers, both of person and mind."

"I hope you have said nothing to Cecil about this!" exclaimed the baronet. "Boys are usually frightened at his age."

"Not a word, any more than to Kate. You know how near and dear to me was her mother. I have written frankly to Lord Lovell, and he is as anxious as myself to bring about the union. They will be in Brighton to-morrow, and dine with us the next day. Contrive to have Cis at home," continued the anxious mother.

"I will," said Sir Vincent, rising.

And so the well-meaning conspiracy against the young man's liberty and peace of mind was commenced.

Meanwhile, how was the youthful hope of the house of Mordaunt occupied? Had they known, they might not have thought their hopes so likely to be satisfied as they might have wished.

Cecil, weary of the beach, had strolled into the town, and selecting such ways as were not very much frequented by his own class of acquaintances, gave way once more to a deep revery.

It will not be difficult for our readers to surmise the object of his thoughts.

At his age love is such a necessity of existence, such a craving of mind and soul, that no other sentiment is able to control or absorb it. Ever since the disappearance of Maud Meriton, his day-dreams and nightly visions were all one.

He had lived sufficiently in her society to have no fear about the true state of his feeling. He loved her deeply, sincerely, without doubt or hesitation; and had made up his mind, in the first place, to discover her place of concealment, in the next, to win her, if perseverance and devotion could do so.

And what young man at his age has any suspicion relative to his ultimate success? Love is a golden thread, the links of which are sometimes broken, but which reunite of themselves, soldered by hope and faith.

Mechanically during his walk he halted before the window of a bookseller's shop, and read the titles of some of the books. He certainly did not understand what he read, his attention was so absorbed.

Suddenly, however, he raised his head, and stood immovable with surprise.

From the very shop-door passed out the middle-aged domestic who had waited upon Maud while she nursed him. She had a packet of books under her arm, and crossed the street without noticing him.

Here was a providential accident, of which he at once determined to take advantage.

The day was warm but very windy, and just as the woman turned up a long, narrow and steep street his eyes fell upon a ready-made clothes-shop, at the door of which were a number of guinea cloaks, providently supplied as a remedy against dust. With a rapidity which surprised the worthy shopkeeper, he purchased one, and a cap, leaving his hat until his return, and, thus disguised, followed at a distance the steps of the attendant.

She was not the most active person in the world, and was thus easily kept in view until she reached an out-of-the-way part of the town quite unknown to the young man. Here she paused, and looked behind; Cecil, at the moment, fortunately for him, looking up at the name of the street.

She saw a youth of an appearance by no means suspicious, and went on; this time, down a road lined by high trees, behind one of which it was quite easy for Cecil Mordaunt, at any moment, completely to hide himself.

Presently she halted before a handsome but old-fashioned house with a large garden, surrounded by high walls overgrown by ivy. Once more she paused, Cecil standing upright as a sentry behind the nearest tree.

Her glance, however, appeared to scan the road only from habit, for the next instant she rang sharply. After about a minute a small grating was opened, and a face peered through. Not a word was spoken; the door moved on its hinges, and she was admitted.

Cecil, with a sigh, seated himself on a low bench opposite, deeply overhung with ivy, and quite in the shade of a huge elm, the branches of which projected into the garden near which he had stationed himself.

Scarcely had he done so, when his face fell into his hands, and he mused deeply. Behind those cruel walls, immured as in a prison, doubtless, was she of the beautiful locks, and bright eyes, and angelic form, who had gained such an abiding place in his heart.

And he dared not venture to do that which a domestic had done.

Truly there was a halo round an Englishman's house that did defend it as with a wall of brass.

Still, he was determined to have no thought of giving up; he would have patience; and, if it cost him years, overcome the obstinate resistance of the cruel father.

As these thoughts passed rapidly through his mind, the sound of numerous horses was heard coming from the end of the street. Anxious not to be seen, the young man drew himself up on the seat under the ivy, his head almost touching the branches of the huge elms, and thus waited.

A low exclamation escaped him next minute, for foremost in a group of several personages came the bright vision of the girl herself, beaming with beauty, and health, and youth.

She rode with that exquisite grace which belonged to all her actions, her countenance animated by a glow of excitement. The lover's eye, however, seemed somehow to detect in the expression of her countenance something sad, or, at all events, thoughtful.

Her companion was a lady of great beauty and maturer charms—to all appearance, about five and twenty.

Behind them rode Mr. Meriton and a man somewhat older and darker, with the beard almost of an Oriental character, whose black and roving eyes appeared to indicate one whose passions, when roused, were both violent and angry; at all events, he did not look a man to be offended with impunity.

Maud drew rein at the door, and as she did so a groom rode up and took her horse, from which she alighted with a grace that made the lover's heart beat. How glad would he have been to have had the privilege of assisting her to descend!

All did the same, the door opened of itself, and then the groom led away the horses.

Cecil Mordaunt was alone in the solitary street, the brief disturbance of its quietude appearing to him like a dream.

For some time he remained bewildered by the multiplicity and variety of his thoughts. They floated before him in a perfect jumble, while his heart beat wildly and fiercely.

At all events, he had discovered her retreat; but that was little. Who and what was she? This was the question he continually asked himself. He was well aware that no one knew anything whatever of this Mr. Meriton, nor could peerage, baronetage, or Court Guide afford him any clue.

This was the more annoying that he knew this was a stumbling-block in his way not easily to be got over. His father was one of the proudest and haughtiest of men, having more than once, in his presence, inveighed against ill-assorted and degrading marriages.

But youth is not to be cast down, even by such difficulties as these, and when he left his post it was rather rejoicing than otherwise.

He did not return, but, going up to the end of the road, found the house occupied by the Meritons was the last, having a back garden that ended in some fields not wholly closed to the public.

This was pretty well for one day, and as he did not wish, by a very long absence, to provoke any lengthy explanations, he returned in the direction of his home, first leaving his cap and loose coat in the care of the shopkeeper, affirming that it would be convenient to put them on there for a stroll on the hills.

It was two o'clock when he sauntered into his mother's apartments, where he found Captain Arundell, his father, and one or two acquaintances at luncheon. The young man entered, beaming with some inner feeling that gave him the appearance of having improved in health from his long walk.

"You look quite blooming, Cecil," said his mother, laughing.

"The downs give one a breather," he replied, and turning to Captain Arundell, changed the subject.

When, shortly after, the two officers went out together, Cecil Mordaunt made no remark on the subject nearest his heart. There was something delightful in the mystery which surrounded her whole being—in the secrecy with which he felt it necessary to wrap his whole proceedings. To the other he seemed to have dismissed the girl from his mind—to have even forgotten his romantic Teddington adventure.

But the mistake was almost a fatal one; and had serious consequences in the future.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ON THE TRACK.

A few days before Cecil Mordaunt discovered the abode to which Mr. Meriton had removed, a party reached one of the principal hotels in Brighton. It was one that would, a few years before, have created a sensation almost unparalleled in the history of the house. Then Lucilla della Rocca was the *furore* of the opera, the most popular *prima donna* of many seasons, and though now not less thought of a stranger for some time to the English stage.

She had made the tour of the continent—had sung in Italy, Germany and Russia, in every musical capital save Paris, where nothing is appreciated that is not national, and where an Italian Opera exists merely on sufferance.

She was never in finer voice, never more beautiful.

During the sixteen years she had been before the public not a breath of calumny had fallen upon her name. She was accompanied everywhere by the Signor della Rocca and a grim old English domestic, grown very aged in her service.

And now, just in the very height of the London season, and a week before her own appearance at the opera, she had come down to stay at Brighton for a few days.

It may be readily understood, by those to whom Lucilla's double life was no secret, that she had some motive in this action. The truth was, she was ever as it were in the pursuit of a phantom. She had given up a lucrative engagement in England to go on the continent, because she had been told Hubert Mordaunt was there—Hubert Mordaunt, whom she believed to be the abductor of her child.

Several times she had been close upon his track, once or twice she had tried even to address him. But he had always refused an interview, and strenuously ignored her.

He was now, after a very long absence, known to be in Brighton, still leading the same strange, misanthropic life which had gained him all over Europe something of the reputation which second-class French and German novelists ascribe to Lord Byron.

He was regarded as a sort of vampire, or, at best, a mere selfish kind of hermit.

He lived richly, but in total retirement; he had no friends, associated with nobody. But his horses were magnificent, his equipages splendid, and the appointments of his apartments of the most luxurious character.

He had been preceded to Brighton by a kind of steward or factotum, a man of saturnine habits, great secretiveness and utterly impenetrable; in fact, he appeared to have the character of what he looked—an Asiatic. Nothing was to be got out of him. He secured a house which was as far separate from all others as it could be, furnished it, took possession of stables, and then his master came down.

His household was small, as he lived absolutely alone: his steward, already alluded to, was really an Irishman, brought up in France, who spoke a dozen languages: a valet, two housemaids, who were forbidden to speak to, even to see him; and an Italian cook. To this may be added a page, with a pale Oriental face, who had the misfortune to be dumb, though not deaf.

This boy, too, appeared of Eastern origin, to judge from his excessive submissiveness, subdued manner, and watchful care of his master. They appeared to understand one another perfectly—though communicating only by the language of signs.

A glance at times was enough; the domestics would indeed often stare with surprise to see how readily the boy Hafez obeyed a look.

In England if a man be rich and sullen, he has ample opportunity to satisfy his taste for solitude—for not even the police have anything to say to him here.

Society stares at him, but as no well-bred person in any station of life ever strives to force an acquaintance, he is quite able to carry out his own theory of abstraction from mankind.

But there is one penalty a man pays for these odd views of life—he becomes notorious: so that when men spoke of Mr. Hubert Mordaunt, of Trendledeep Manor, speculations of all kinds were freely indulged in.

Society said he was mad, as indeed any one must be who voluntarily separates himself from all his kind, and becomes to all intents and purposes as useless as a hermit crab.

He never smiled; his face was pale, his eyes seemed to look inward; and a keen judge of physiognomy would at once have declared that he lived only in memory of some great crime—some heavy remorse, or some deep sorrow.

And this was the man to wring a secret from whom the Signorina della Rocca had come down to Brighton.

She began by a letter, sent by post, which was at once brought back—refused.

This was a profound and bitter mortification to the signorina, whose letter had been opened. She knew perfectly well how inviolate the English postal system is; but, still, a portion of her secret was at the mercy of some young clerk in the office.

This rebuff set her thinking. A personal interview was of all things that which she wished now to avoid; this was, in fact, a thing too horrible to contemplate. And, yet, if she would know the truth, if her soul was to receive the only comfort for which she cared in life, it must come to this.

The master of Trendledeep was well known to be passionately fond of music, and the *prima donna* had, at last, to resort to the faint hope that if her house were thrown open, he might be tempted to visit her.

With great *éclat* she had it announced that the Signorina Lucilla della Rocca intended to give one evening, or rather at-home, at which all her friends were welcome. He might take this bait and come.

She little thought how merciful Heaven was to be to her—how, by strange and tortuous means, this idea was to bring about ends she had never ceased to wish for, though she had long ceased to hope for.

It was on the day before the dinner party at the baronet's that the *prima donna* gave her musical evening. Every one who intended to call in the evening was expected to leave his card, and one of those who did so early was Captain Arundell.

He had met the glorious singer abroad and much esteemed her. In fact, they were exceedingly intimate.

About a quarter of an hour after he had left her, he came across Cecil Mordaunt, returning from a stroll to the neighborhood of the residence which contained his beloved.

"One never sees you now," said the gallant captain. "Where do you hide yourself?"

"Hide!" repeated the young man, with a transient flush; "I don't hide. I ride about—I walk."

"Alone, my friend, which is not good for your health or morals. But this evening I want you—you must go with me to see the most bewitching woman, the most lovely singer in creation."

Now, as Cecil Mordaunt had no valid excuse to give for not going, unless he revealed the absurd one of wanting to hover round a house to which he could not hope to obtain admission, he accepted the invitation.

The most singular and unexpected results are often brought about in the most innocent manner.

Cecil Mordaunt dined early with his parents, who were going to show themselves at the theatre—one of the most charming ones in the country—and he was able, therefore, to join Captain Arundell at an early hour.

The two friends conversed of indifferent things, and then, precisely at the time at which they were expected, started to reach the hotel, in the splendid apartments of which Signorina Lucilla della Rocca held her musical reception.

The rooms were full, as professional rooms generally are when the *élite* of society can contrive to hear a singer for nothing. Somebody of note—but of inferior note to the *diva*—was at the instrument when they entered, so that, with the usual politeness of society, the majority were talking.

The signorina, in all the superbness of her beauty, stood to receive her guests near the door.

She was for a moment quite alone when the captain pressed forward to present his friend.

"Pardon me, signorina," he said, advancing, "but I have taken the liberty of bringing a very dear and valued friend of mine—Cecil Mordaunt, son of Sir Vincent," he added, turning round. "Cecil, this is the Signorina della Rocca, of whom you have heard so much."

It would be difficult to tell who looked most blank and most astonished, the lady or the youth. The actress, it is true, recovered her self-possession in a moment; but Cecil, with open mouth, looked, if the truth must be told, rather foolish.

"One would fancy that you knew me, sir," she said, in a voice that thrilled to his very soul.

"No, no; but I have seen some one exactly like you, only—only—" he stammered.

"Younger?" she put in, with admirable self-command.

"Yes, but not more beautiful. Pardon, lady, but if she were not purely English, I could fancy she were your daughter."

"Monsieur Cecil," she continued, with a rich laugh that seemed so genuine and true, "I should be glad to hear about this young lady who is so like me. My poor concert will be over at ten: will you remain to supper? We can then have the pleasure of an hour's conversation."

To such an invitation there was no refusal possible; so Cecil Mordaunt bowed, and joined his friend, Captain Arundell, leaving the singer in a state of fever and commotion which, actress as she was, she could scarcely dissemble.

The captain in the Guards had not heard any part of the colloquy, but had noticed slight traces of excitement. He did not, however, question the younger officer, but waited for the other to speak: nor was he disappointed.

"I am to stop to supper," he said, presently.

"Indeed!" replied his friend, with a smile. "You are highly favored. I have known the signorina eight years, and never was asked but twice."

Cecil also smiled, but without fatuity. He was not that pestilent thing, a coxcomb, a male coquette, who thinks, if a woman be unusually polite, she is in love with his charms of person, and who generally disgusts all sensible women.

From that time until ten o'clock all hearts and souls were given up to the entrancing voice of the charmer, to the soft influences of an art which is always most powerful with those who have least care for real life, and who live in a world of their own creation.

Then Lucilla rose, and gave evident tokens that the evening had finished. Like all clever women, she was able to let people see that she was weary, and so in a very short time the greater part of the company had retired.

Cecil Mordaunt, Captain Arundell, the Signor della Rocca, and another celebrated Italian singer remained to a supper which was one of those elegant things which few who have not travelled know how to order or select.

Never had the signorina been more brilliant, more charming in her conversation, which was never directed unto any one in particular until supper was over, when, in quite a queenly way, she retired to a couch at some distance from the others, and signed to Cecil Mordaunt to keep her company.

"And so," she said, behind her fan, "you have seen somebody, much younger, but, still, who very much resembles me?"

"I have, lady: and, perhaps, it were well for me that I had not seen her," he replied, with the ready frankness and innocence of youth.

"Why?"

"It is quite a history," replied Cecil Mordaunt, who seemed, under the influence of this woman he had never before seen, to be singularly open-hearted and frank, as he would not have been to his own mother.

"I am old enough to be your mother," she said, with forced calmness, "and anything you tell me will be a profound secret. I take an interest in this young lady who is so like me, so tell me all about her."

Cecil Mordaunt no longer hesitated. He was young, he was unsuspicious, he had no reason for not telling his history to this beautiful and fascinating woman, who was so much like his beloved Maud, only so much more grand and stately, and beautiful; and, besides, to a kind and congenial feminine mind, it was a kind of relief to talk of the girl that he loved.

He began. To the first part, which had reference only to himself, and how he came to visit Hampton Races, the signorina listened with polite attention only, not unfrequently supplemented by a frown of dark displeasure; but when he came to the accident, when he described the house to which he was taken, the angelic conduct of his "bright particular star," her eyes flashed, her cheeks reddened, her lips moved convulsively. She heard him without interruption until the return of the father was recorded.

"What was he like?" asked the singer, in tones which were scarcely as calm as usual.

The young man described him.

"Ah!" muttered Lucilla. "Hubert Treherne Mordaunt, I have you now!"

"Did you speak, madam?" he hesitatingly observed.

"Nothing; and this elderly or, rather, middle-aged domestic—what was she like?"

Cecil was not a very good portrait-painter, but under the influence of the beautiful Italian, he grew tolerably eloquent.

"And this young lady, who is so like me—do you often see her?" continued Lucilla, who recognized the Jessie of Undercliff.

Cecil told then how, because he wished to renew the acquaintance, the father had signified his displeasure; and finally recorded how, when he revisited the house, and called, the whole family had flown.

"And you have lost sight of them?" cried the singer, in accents of such terrible dismay that, despite the state of his own feelings, the young man's suspicions were aroused.

"I did," he said; "but, excuse me, madam, you appear to be deply interested in this young lady?"

"I am. I would give much to see her. A very strong conviction has entered my mind that she is one whom I have sought for years; if so, and she be found, your best friend in any honorable pursuit, would naturally be myself. What was her name?"

"Maud Adela Meriton."

"So like, and yet so unlike. But since then have you no clue?" she continued.

"I have; but pardon me, lady, if I add it is my intention to follow it up, and that is all I can tell you to-night. In the days to come I shall probably know more, if you will allow me to communicate with you. Surely you mean her—us—no ill?"

"Us! Does she know of this love which is so fierce and transparent!" asked the Italian *prima donna*, in a tone which was not easily to be understood, so strange was its mixture of inquiry and menace.

"I do not know—I cannot say—but I have the most fervent hope that she did and does thoroughly understand my feelings."

"You are very young, Mr. Mordaunt," resumed his new friend, speaking gently, "very young to make up your mind on so important a subject—one affecting the happiness of your whole future life."

"I am young; but I am resolved and determined that, come what will, Maud Meriton shall be my wife; and that if not, the name of Mordaunt may, as far as I am concerned, become extinct. Should I fail to win, should her parents and mine prevent our union, my bride shall be my sword—and whether I die young on a field of battle or live to be an aged general, will I know no other."

"Many have spoken like yourself," replied the signorina, sadly; "but what you say has the ring of the true metal. I should be glad to be friends—who knows?—the acquaintance you have made so strangely may be of use to you. When will you come and see me again?"

"I have engagements to-morrow."

"Will you come the next day to luncheon, then?" she asked.

"Certainly, madam."

And the interview ended. Cecil and the signorina joined the general party, a few more words passed, and then young Cecil, by no means loth, went off to smoke a segar with his friend the captain.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 67.)

THE

Bandits of the Prairie.

A TALE OF THE TEXAN FRONTIER.

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

CHAPTER IX.

LOUISA ATTEMPTS TO ESCAPE.

When the beautiful captive fell upon her knees and implored her aid, the bandit's wife, hardened as she was by frequent participation in criminal deeds, was affected by the girl's distress.

"Alas, poor girl, I have not the power to save you," she said.

"Oh, you have, you have—open the door and let me go, and I will bless your name forever."

"You know not what you ask," replied Inez. "Were I to let you go, the captain would take my life."

"No, no—Gonzales is Juan's friend—he is your husband, and would protect you from the captain's wrath."

"You do not know my husband," said the woman, sadly. "He would be the last one to shield me from the captain's anger, were I to disobey orders and let you out of the room."

"But they would not kill you—they would not harm you—you could tell them that I effected my escape myself. Oh, for God's sake, let me go!"

"It is impossible!"

"Oh, Heaven! have you no heart? Have pity upon me—do not let one so young and innocent as I am be placed in the power of that wicked man. Think of my parents—of my old father, and my beautiful mother. I was their pet, their darling—think of my lover, who, scarcely one hour ago, pressed fond kisses upon my lips—their hearts will break for my sake. Oh, woman, woman, if ever you felt a thrill of innocent love in your bosom, release me, and let me flee from this terrible place!"

"You plead in vain," said Inez, sadly, but firmly. "I must not, I dare not let you go—my life is in the hands of these desperate men, and I must obey them. And even were I to let you out of this room, you could not escape—the cave is dark and full of secret passages, and in all probability the entrance is guarded. You could not escape, were you outside the cave—you could not find the way home, and the men would soon overtake you."

"I will risk that—I will risk anything—only let me out of this room before that dreadful man returns. Heaven will curse you if you do not."

"I tell you, girl, for the last time, that what you ask is impossible."

"Oh, God, help me!" groaned Louisa, cowering down until her face was buried in her lap. A storm of sobs shook her graceful form. The woman looked on in silence for a moment, and her dark, sorrowful eyes grew moist with tears. She approached the weeping girl, and laid her hand gently upon her head.

"I am sorry for you," she said, "and if I had the power to aid you, I would do so; but to let you go now would only make matters worse for us both. You could not possibly escape, and the attempt would only excite the anger of Captain Juan. You need not take on so terribly; I am sure that the captain means you no immediate harm, and you may yet have a chance to escape. If there should be no other chance, I carry a keen stiletto in my bosom—you can use that, if you prefer death to being the captain's wife."

"Better death—better a thousand deaths than such a life as that."

"The time was when I would have thought the same. Yes, girl—I was once young and beautiful, and innocent as yourself. Now—but no matter—my affairs would not interest you. Dry your tears, my child, and rest yourself on this bed—you are worn out with grief. You need have no fears; Juan or any one else will not trouble us to-night."

Louisa followed the woman's advice, and threw herself upon one of the couches. She could not sleep, but she pretended to do so, hoping by this means to gain some chance of escape. She closed her eyes, and breathed heavily; and the woman after watching her for a few moments, left her side and walked toward the door. Here she hesitated a moment, and looked anxiously toward the girl; but at length, satisfied that her prisoner was sound asleep, she cautiously unbarred the door, and swinging it open, she stood motionless in the aperture, apparently listening intently.

Louisa watched these movements with breathless interest. Arising from her couch, she stole noiselessly as a ghost across the room until she stood directly behind her jailor. Could she pass her, and could she find her way out of the awfully dark cavern? Should she make the attempt? She could not more than fail, and she *might* succeed—she might make her way back to home and happiness. With a silent prayer for aid, she summoned all her strength, and sprang forward through the narrow doorway, almost throwing Gonzales's wife to the ground by the violence of her movements.

"Dios!" cried the astonished woman; then, comprehending what had happened, she sprang after the fleeing girl, who eluded her grasp, and in a moment was lost to sight.

"Well, let her go," said Inez, returning to her room. "I could not find her if I tried, and I shall not try. God grant that she may escape in safety—she is a pretty, innocent child, and I cannot help feeling pity for her."

Inez closed the door, and sat down to await the return of Juan.

"The captain's anger will be terrible," she soliloquized, "but I care not, I did not intend to let the maiden out, but since she is gone I am truly glad. But she cannot escape—she will be seen by the guard and dragged back to her prison. Poor girl—and yet, why should *I* pity her so much?"

Meanwhile Louisa was fleeing through the darkness, knowing not which way to go to reach the open air. Instead of taking the outward passage, she took that leading to the room in which the bandit Gomez was sleeping, and went groping forward, stumbling over the rough stones, tearing her dress and bruising her tender flesh; but she still struggled forward, hoping against hope, until she arrived at the large apartment. Feeling around the walls for some means of egress, her hands came in contact with the sleeping man's face. She recoiled with a slight exclamation of terror: and Gomez, partially awakened, groaned in a fearful manner, and turned over to take a fresh nap. Trembling with horror, Louisa shrank away from the unknown occupant of the room, and crawled back along the passage by which she had come. When she reached the main entrance, she heard voices, evidently in the room to which she had first been conveyed; the door was open, and a stream of light illumined a part of the cave. She heard a man's loud, coarse voice saying angrily:

"Escaped! Ten thousand furies! Then your life shall pay for your carelessness!"

"Juan has returned," thought Louisa. "Oh, Heaven, help me!"

She fled rapidly along the passage, away from the sound of the voices: but her ears caught the woman's terrified shriek: "Help, murder! help!"

"He will kill her," groaned the girl, "and if I go back he will kill me also. Oh, if I can only escape and expose this man's villainy!"

Panting and trembling, she hurried on. She was nearing the mouth of the cave—she could feel the fresh air on her fevered brow. Suddenly she stumbled and nearly fell to the ground over the body of the still slumbering Rodolpho, whose sleep was too deep to be disturbed by this circumstance. Louisa now knew that she was past the guard; a few steps further, and she parted the shrubbery and stood in the open air—free.

Free! She felt like shouting for joy, but she restrained herself, and turned to flee along the banks of the stream. She knew not which way to go, but she had but one thought—to get away from that dreadful place and the power of the wicked herdsman. Ere she had taken a dozen steps, she found herself face to face with a man—but whether friend or enemy, she could not tell in the darkness.

"Ah, who have we here?" said the man, in a soft, musical voice.

"For Heaven's sake, let me go, whoever you are," gasped Louisa. "I am a poor girl fleeing for my life—let me go on, I implore you."

"Ha! this is the captain's prisoner," exclaimed Carlos, for it was he.

"I was carried from my home by my father's herdsman, who is an outlaw and a robber. Perhaps you are one of his band; but if you are, for God's sake have pity upon me and let me escape. I never harmed you—I never harmed any one—let me go."

"Sorry to disoblige you, miss," replied Carlos, "but I must detain you. I know the captain will be terribly put out if you escape."

Carlos grasped the girl firmly by the wrists. At the same moment voices were heard at the mouth of the cave, and Juan himself came forth, leaving Inez, with the light, inside.

"This way, captain," said Carlos, in low tones.

"Who speaks?" asked Juan, eagerly.

"I, Carlos—I have caught the girl for you."

Juan approached. Louisa struggled desperately to free herself from the bandit's grasp, but in vain.

"May God curse you for your cruelty," she cried.

"Ha, my pretty dear, I have found you again," hissed Juan. "You will never give me the slip again. Carlos, bear her into the cave—hold your hand over her mouth, or she will cry out."

Carlos grasped the almost fainting form in his arms and entered the cave, followed by Juan, who, now that the excitement was over, was almost too weak to walk. Inside the cave they met the woman, Inez, beside the form of Rodolpho.

"Your guard has been extremely vigilant, captain," she said, sarcastically. "You threatened to kill me for being remiss in my duty, but I suppose this fellow may go unpunished."

"Ha!" said Juan. "Awake, you drowsy fool, or I will kick what little life you have out of you."

Two or three vigorous kicks from Juan's heavy boots effectually aroused the sleeper, and he sprang to his feet in terror.

"What's wrong?—has the girl escaped?" he asked.

"If she has not, it is no fault of yours," replied Juan, angrily. "You are an excellent guard, indeed; a thunder-storm would scarcely awake you."

"I beg your pardon, captain—I couldn't keep awake," said Rodolpho, sullenly.

"Go, then, and sleep—and take that to help you along," growled Juan, giving the man a kick that sent him staggering several feet away.

"Now lead the way, Inez, to your room," he continued.

Holding the candle in her hand, Inez walked rapidly along the passage: Carlos followed, bearing the captive maiden in his arms, and Juan staggered along in the rear, muttering curses against the panther, Rodolpho, and the wife of his lieutenant.

At last they entered the room, and Juan closed the door and leaned his back against it, too weak longer to stand unsupported. Carlos placed his burden upon a chair, and for the first time looked upon the girl's deathly-pale but exquisitely beautiful face.

"Holy Mother! this is an angel!" he exclaimed, gazing spell-bound at the lovely prisoner.

"And in the power of the devil," said Inez, in a low voice.

"Aye, that is true," murmured Carlos, arousing himself from his abstraction. "Poor girl—poor girl—I am sorry for her; she deserves a better fate."

"What are you saying?" demanded Juan, staggering forward into the full light of the candle.

At the sight of the herdsman's horribly blood-stained figure, Louisa uttered a scream, and fell down upon her face unconscious; and even Carlos started back, and threw out his hands as if to ward off the fearful apparition.

"Are you a fool, man," cried Juan, fiercely, "or have you the heart of a woman, that you turn pale and stagger back at the sight of a little blood?"

"I beg your pardon, Captain—but you know not what a dreadful appearance you present. You are covered with blood from head to foot. What have you been doing?"

"Struggling with the claws of a panther—the brute leaped upon me ere I was aware of its presence."

"You may be thankful that you escaped with life, captain."

"So I am—but I've nobody to thank but myself. I am weak from loss of blood, and must retire to rest. But first the girl must be secured, so that she cannot escape again. Carlos, take this cord and bind her arms behind her back, and bind her ankles together."

"I see no need of this cruelty," remonstrated Carlos.

"It is my wish, and that is sufficient," replied Juan.

"Then you may carry out your wishes yourself—for I will have no hand in binding this beautiful, helpless girl, whom your cruelty has already rendered unconscious."

Carlos stepped back a few paces, and quietly folded his arms.

"Curse your insolence!" roared the bandit captain, furiously. "I will pay you for this yet, my fine fellow; and I can bind the girl myself."

He bent over Louisa's prostrate form—but the girl opened her eyes, and uttered another piercing shriek.

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, leave me, or kill me at once," she cried.

"Give me the cords," said Inez, "and stand back. I will bind her."

"Make the knot secure," said Juan, watching the operation critically. "Now place her on the bed, and watch her closely. Remember, if you dare to aid her to escape, your own life will pay for your treachery. Carlos, begone to your bed."

With a threatening glance at the impassive face of Inez, Juan followed Carlos from the apartment, and staggered away to the other room of the cave, where he was soon in the land of dreams. Dreams! what must they have been to him?

CHAPTER X.

WHAT BECAME OF WALTER DARRELL.

When Walter Darrell bounded away from his tormentors and ran toward the woods, a great change had taken place in his feelings. When he heard the medicine-man of the Camanches avow that his sweetheart, Louisa, was not in their hands, his despairing indifference gave place to an eager desire for life, and he resolved to escape, if there should be any possible chance: so, when he found himself outside the lines of screaming squaws, he strained every nerve and muscle to the utmost—and as we have seen, outran his pursuers.

When he found himself in the cover of the wood, he paused a moment to take fresh breath; but seeing that his enemies were close at hand, he again started forward, heading directly for the banks of the stream, as he thought if he reached that he might be able to make his escape. The shrubbery and underbrush in the forest were dense, and impeded his progress somewhat; but the friendly foliage concealed his form from the sharp eyes of the Camanches; and as the ground was dry and hard, his feet left no perceptible trail, and he was careful to disturb the foliage as little as possible.

Hurrying along in this manner, Darrell soon reached the bluff, at the foot of which ran the sluggish stream. But here a great difficulty presented itself. The rocky bluff was at least thirty feet high, in places perpendicular, in others overjutting so much that a stone dropping from the top would fall almost in the middle of the stream. There was no point where a descent could be made; the smooth, rocky wall would afford no foothold. Darrell gazed up and down the stream; the steep bluff ran for more than a hundred yards each way, affording no safe point for descent.

"What shall I do?" muttered Darrell. "To leap into the stream will be almost certain death."

The loud, fierce yells of the Camanches were heard a short distance behind.

"To remain here will be absolutely certain death, and of the most horrible kind," thought the young man; "I choose to die the easier death."

He gazed for a moment down upon the dark water below. The stream appeared to be deep at that point, and if it was free from rock, there was a possibility of making the leap without serious injury; but Darrell shuddered as he saw the gray crests of several rocks protruding above the surface of the water.

"It will be certain death," he murmured, hesitatingly.

The blood-curdling yells of his savage foes sounded nearer and nearer.

"But this death will be instantaneous," he said, nerving himself for the leap. "Louisa, my love, my life, if you are in the world of spirits, I come to you—if you are still in the land of the living, good-bye!"

With a word of prayer on his lips, Darrell sprang outward from the overjutting cliff. His form descended swiftly through the air, and struck the water, feet foremost, in the middle of the stream. Fortunately, he had avoided the rocks, of which the stream was full; and although he was stunned for a moment by the force of the fall, he soon recovered his senses and his strength; and as he was an excellent swimmer, he struck out boldly for the shore. He reached it in safety, and crawling up the low, grassy bank, he concealed himself in a clump of bushes, and looked back at the cliffs from which he had daringly leaped.

The yells of the Camanches still resounded through the air; and Darrell saw two or three of the savages standing on the edge of the cliff, pointing down at the water. He supposed that they had discovered his mode of escape, and expected every moment to hear some of them crossing the stream in pursuit. But the Indians did not believe that their captive had leaped from the cliff; they knew that the water below was full of sharp rocks, and they conceived it impossible for any human being to escape alive in such a manner. They soon left the brow of the bluff, and joined their companions in thoroughly searching the tract of woods, where they believed the fugitive was still concealed.

"Well, what shall I do now?" soliloquized Darrell, stretching his sore and weary limbs. "I have escaped their clutches for the moment, but to what purpose? I am alone in the midst of the Indian country, without arms or means of

subsistence; even if I can elude the savages, I will in all probability die of starvation or thirst before I can reach the white settlements. And my friend is still in their hands, doomed to suffer the terrible torture of death at the stake. Poor George! shall I leave him to his fate? No, no—and yet, what else can I do? To attempt to rescue him now would be utter madness. Alas! the brave boy must die—and I—why did I try to escape, only to prolong my own tortures? Louisa—beautiful, lost Louisa, I will never give up until I find her, or at least learn the manner of her death."

Thus communing with his own thoughts, Darrell arose to his feet, and looked and listened intently, to discover if any of the Indians were in pursuit. No one was to be seen, although he could still hear them howling through the forest.

"Unused to border life as I am, it seems I have outwitted the Camanche braves," he said. "Now Heaven direct my steps, for I know not what way to go."

There was a narrow strip of timber skirting the stream, but Darrell soon made his way through this, and found himself at the edge of a level and apparently boundless plain; as far as the eye could reach there was nothing to break the monotony of the vast, sandy desert, except in places a clump of miserable, stunted sage-brush.

"The prospect looks gloomy enough," thought Darrell, "but I shall go forward. Come what will, I cannot die but once, nor suffer greater torture than that from which I have just escaped—and which my friend and the girl—Heaven help them—must endure."

The young man started resolutely across the vast expanse. His limbs were weary and his heart was sick, but, in spite of all this, he walked swiftly forward for more than an hour. At last his strength began to desert him; his frame, though young and strong, was not inured to such hardships as it had lately passed through; his limbs trembled beneath him, and to save himself from falling he was obliged to recline in the welcome shade afforded by a bunch of sage-brush. The sun was sinking in the western heavens, although his beams were still uncomfortably warm; a few hours longer and darkness would fall over the dreary solitude.

"Oh, God!" moaned Darrell, "must I die so soon—die alone in the desert—no one near to bear the news of my untimely fate to my friends? And Louisa—my beautiful darling—where is she? Ah, if I could only know that she is safe, I could die in peace."

"Talk not of dyin', young man," said a gruff voice.

Darrell sprang to his feet, electrified with new life at the sound of a white man's voice.

Standing before him, regarding him with a kindly smile on his bronzed and bearded face, was a man of about fifty years of age, whose dress and manner proclaimed him to be a hunter and scout. In his hand he held a long, glittering rifle, and his belt was profusely adorned with pistols and knives. His face was peculiarly frank and pleasing in expression, although his features were not handsome.

"I heard you say suthin' about dyin'," he remarked again.

"Well, I am not far from death's door, I believe," remarked Darrell, with a faint smile.

"You seem to be pooty near played out, that's a fact, but you're not goin' to die—that is, if I can help it. Will you tell me who you are, youngster?"

"My name is Walter Darrell. I have just escaped from the hands of the Indians, but my strength failed me, and I lay down here to die."

"You're tired out and starved together—that's all. Here, eat this bit of dried antelope—that will bring you around in a hurry," said the old hunter, producing a piece of meat from a wallet which he carried at his belt. Darrell devoured the delicious food eagerly, and immediately felt much revived.

"I knew that would do the business," remarked the stranger, smiling.

"Will you tell me your name, my kind friend?" asked Darrell.

"Sartin, my boy, I'll do that. I'm called Jack Lewis; and though I don't mean to brag, I will say that my name is purty well known along the frontier."

"Lewis?" said Darrell, eagerly. "Have you a daughter—a young and beautiful girl?"

The hunter's face grew dark at this question.

"Wall," he said, huskily, "I *had* a daughter—as purty a young critter as ever lived; but whether or not she is livin' now is more than I can tell. You see I was away from my cabin t'other morning, and the Injuns—Camanches—snakes—devils, I call 'em—came along and carried my little girl away. Poor Myra! p'r'aps I shall never find her—but, stranger, I'm goin' to rescue her or die."

"Mr Lewis, I left your daughter scarcely two hours ago in the village of the Camanches."

"Ha!" exclaimed the old hunter, intensely excited. "But I was sure of it—I knowed the trail of the scoundrels. What was the brutes goin' to do with my darlin'?"

"I left her bound to the stake," replied Darrell.

"Good God! then she is burnt to death by this time!" groaned the miserable father.

"I think not," answered Darrell, touched by the old man's grief. "I think they intended your daughter no immediate harm, for I heard the medicine-man declare that she should be his wife."

"The medicine-man! A white man, and the biggest devil running unhung. I would rather see my girl dead than in his power. But why was she bound to the stake, if they didn't intend to burn her?"

Darrell explained as briefly as possible the manner of his own escape, and the situation in which he had left his friend, explaining to the indignant hunter that his daughter was only to be a witness of George Stanhope's awful death.

"The fiends!" growled Lewis. "Young man, I reckon you're willin' to help rescue your friend and my girl from the hands of the Camanches?"

"Willing? God knows I will do all in my power, even if I lose my life in the attempt. If you will go with me, I will guide you at once to the Indian village."

"I'll go with you, stranger, with all my heart; but I rather think we couldn't do much alone against the whole tribe of Camanches. We must get some help."

"But where shall we look for aid? Time is precious—before an hour my friend will, in all probability, be past the reach of earthly help."

"We'll be in the Camanche village before an hour rolls away, if the Lord is willin', and I calkerlate he is. Come along with me, Mr. Darrell, will you?"

Darrell followed his new acquaintance a short distance, until they came in sight of a hollow or ravine, at the bottom of which was built a small fire, and about twenty men were gathered around, evidently partaking of refreshments. As many horses were quietly cropping the fresh grass of the valley, a few steps distant from the spot where their masters were seated.

Darrell uttered an exclamation of surprise and joy at this welcome sight.

"Are those all white men—friends?" he asked, eagerly.

"Wall, you may bet they are," replied the old hunter. "They are Captain Carrol's Rangers, and their very name is a terror to the red-skins. You see, stranger, when I found my girl was gone, I started right away after her, and had the good luck to come across the rangers, who at once volunteered to help me rescue her. We followed the trail till we came in sight of the Camanche village, where we knowed the girl was; but we concluded to wait till the night afore we made the attack, so that we might give the Injuns a leetle surprise; but if we'd save that poor feller from bein' roasted alive, we must mount and on to the village right away."

"Yes—there is not a moment to lose," said Darrell, excitedly. "Perhaps while we are talking here my friend is undergoing their infernal tortures. Oh, for Heaven's sake, let us make haste."

"Wall, foller me, and we'll be on our hosses in three seconds."

Jack Lewis dashed furiously down the bank of the ravine, followed closely by Walter Darrell. In a moment they were in the midst of the rangers, who were somewhat astonished at their haste.

"What's up, Lewis?" asked Captain Carrol—a tall, brawny, bearded man of forty years.

"Mount your horses, men—we must on to the Camanche village at once," yelled Lewis. "This here feller has just escaped from thar, and he says a friend of his is about to be roasted, while my girl is tied to a stake to witness the devilish ceremony."

"Ha! is this so?" asked the leader of the rangers, turning to Darrell.

"It is only too true," answered the young man.

"Mount, boys, mount," roared Captain Carroll. "By ——, we'll make a scatterment in the Camanche village, as sure as I am a living sinner."

In a moment all the men were mounted, with the exception of Walter Darrell.

"Jump on behind me," cried Jack Lewis; "my hoss could carry a dozen, if there was room for them on his back. There—now take this revolver, and use it when the time comes. Now we're ready—forward, captain—you know the way—hurrah!"

The wild band of hunters and scouts started at full gallop up the bank of the ravine, and dashed across the plain with terrific speed. They crossed the stream at a convenient point, and soon came in plain sight of the Indian village.

"Great Heaven!" cried Walter Darrell, "we are too late—the fire is kindled—the smoke is ascending!"

"Then we'll murder every red-skin in the village to pay for this," said Jack Lewis. "On, boys, on—shall that poor feller be burnt before our very eyes? I see my girl, too—poor thing, what a sight for her. Hurrah, captain, we must save that feller—hurrah!"

"Hoo—hoo—hoo—ah—ah—ah!" yelled Captain Carrol, rising in his stirrups and imitating the Camanche war-whoop. "On, boys, on—we'll be in time yet—the fire is just started, and hasn't done any harm."

CHAPTER XI.

JUST IN TIME.

"If the man's shins are not scorched, I'm much mistaken," said Lewis, grimly.

"Ah, he is burning to death—see he is enveloped in smoke—I can see the flash of the red flames," cried Walter Darrell. "Oh, God! if we had been a moment sooner, we might have saved him."

"We'll save him yet," thundered the leader of the rangers. "Where there's so much smoke there isn't much flame, and smoke will only strangle him a little. Out with your revolvers, boys—be prepared—take good aim, and kill every red-skin you can. Raise the war-whoop—we'll scare some of 'em to death—charge, boys, charge—hurrah!"

The terrible yell that burst from the throats of the rangers, as they rushed down upon their enemies, might indeed have frightened to death any very sensitive being. The Camanches knew very well by whom they were attacked, and the name of the rangers nearly caused a panic in their midst. But the stern voice of the medicine-man soon called them, and they drew up in a circle around their prisoners, resolved to fight to the death.

"Shoot them down, warriors—the prisoners of the Camanches must not escape," yelled the medicine-man, kicking the blazing sticks closer to the feet of George Stanhope, who, placed between life and death, was likely to become death's victim, for the heat of the fire was growing every moment.

"Cut your way through them—shoot them down right and left, curse them—the prisoners *must* be saved," shouted Captain Carrol.

The battle raged fiercely for a moment; but the death-dealing revolvers of the whites were far more effective than the rifles and arrows of the Indians; the red braves fell before the terrific onset of the rangers like trees before a hurricane; and those that were not killed or wounded grew panic-stricken, and fled to their wigwams, leaving the whites masters of the torture-ground. Only the medicine-man remained by the prisoner, and he grew perfectly frantic with rage when he saw the Camanche braves retreating.

"Ho, warriors," he howled, dancing around like a maniac, "return to the battle—drive the pale-face dogs away, or secure them for the torture. Braves of the Camanches, are you afraid, that you thus run like old women or little children? Cowards, sneaks, squaws! may the curse of the Great Spirit rest upon you!"

"Surrender, you infernal white-skinned, black-hearted medicine-man of the Camanches, or I'll blow your head to atoms," thundered Jack Lewis, covering the renegade with his revolver.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the medicine-man. "I know you, Jack Lewis; I stole your daughter, and would have made her my wife—but now she shall be the bride of death."

Quick as thought, the villain sprang to the side of the trembling girl, and drawing a knife, raised his arm to plunge the blade to her heart; but ere his arm could descend, a ball from Lewis's revolver grazed his temple, and he fell to the ground stunned and bleeding.

"Lay there, you heap of carrion," said Lewis, leaping from his horse and spurning the medicine-man's body with his foot. Then, rushing to his daughter's side, he cut the cords that bound her to the stake, murmuring, huskily, "Oh, Myra, my poor little girl, your old father has found you at last."

"Oh, father, father!" cried the girl, and fell, almost fainting, into her father's outstretched arms.

Meanwhile Walter Darrell and several of the rangers crowded around George Stanhope. Darrell kicked the burning brands away from his friend's feet, while Captain Carrol severed the thongs which bound his limbs.

"You have had a narrow escape, young man," said the ranger.

"Narrow, indeed," replied Stanhope, "and I owe my life to you."

"You owe it rather to your friend here, who brought us word of your perilous situation."

"Oh, Walter, do we see each other again alive and well?" cried Stanhope, grasping his friend's hands.

"We have both escaped almost by a miracle," replied Walter.

"You are not yet out of danger," said Captain Carrol. "We must be getting out of this at once. The Camanches will soon get over their scare, and there are enough of them to gobble us up entirely. Mount your horses, boys—some of you must carry double, and we will make tracks in a hurry."

The rangers were about to comply with their leader's command, when the fallen medicine-man of the Camanches began to revive. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, and attempted to escape from among the whites; but Captain Carrol dealt him a blow from his huge fist that quickly prostrated him once more.

"Bind him fast, men," said the ranger. "We'll take him with us till we come to a handy place, and then we'll make him stretch hemp. He's too big a devil to live any longer."

The men obeyed, and the renegade was bound hand and foot ere he recovered his senses.

"Now give him to me," continued Captain Carrol, mounting his powerful steed.

The form of the medicine-man was lifted to the back of the captain's steed, and the ranger held it firmly before him. The other men, with the rescued prisoners, were soon mounted and ready to start.

"Now forward, boys, in a hurry, or the red-skins will be after us," said Captain Carrol. "We have made a good job of this; there will be mourning and blackened faces in the wigwams of the Camanches for many days—we have slain several of their braves and captured their famous medicine-man, and escaped unharmed ourselves."

"Do you think to escape so easily?" demanded the medicine-man, who had now recovered from the effects of the blow dealt him by his captor.

"I don't see what's to hinder," answered the ranger.

"The warriors of the Camanches will be upon you ere the sinking of the sun."

"Ha, ha! I rather think *you* won't be there to lead them on," laughed Carrol.

"What do you intend to do with me?" calmly inquired the renegade.

"Well, we ought to tie you to a post, and toast you in regular Camanche fashion—but as we never make a practice of doing that, we'll string you up to the first suitable tree we find."

"Do you think you have the power to do this with the great medicine-man of the Camanches?"

"Mister, I calculate we have a rope that will bear the weight of a heavier man than you; and as to your being the medicine-man of the Camanches, we don't care a darn for any such nonsense. You'll find that your pow-wowing will have no effect on us. You are a miserable, thieving, murdering coward, ten times worse than the Indians themselves, and you've got to die."

"I will invoke the aid of the Great Spirit," said the medicine-man.

"Invoke the aid of the devil whom you serve," roared the captain of the rangers, giving his prisoner no very gentle shake. "I tell you you've got to hang, and you may as well be preparing to meet your doom—though I s'pose it would be useless for such a fiend as you to pray."

"You yourself should pray, for before another day passes, you and all your band shall be launched into eternity," retorted the prisoner, furiously.

"Ha, ha, ha! who will do all this?" asked Captain Carrol, laughing.

"The braves of the Camanches, led by myself."

"You!" cried the ranger, savagely. "Before another day passes, you will be where you naturally belong, and where you ought to have been long ago—*in hell!*"

"We shall see!" said the medicine-man, calmly.

"Ay, most certainly you shall see and feel a rope around your neck; and if you don't hold your tongue, I will strangle you at once, and be rid of your dirty carcass."

"I fear you not," replied the prisoner, doggedly, "but I don't wish to waste words with you. Keep your own counsel and I will keep mine."

"Then don't let me hear another word out of you till we come to a convenient tree, where we'll allow you to make a speech."

The prisoner made no reply to this; but his gray eyes gleamed like coals of fire, and his teeth ground against each other in fury. The captain of the rangers held his captive securely, while he urged his doubly-burdened steed into a swift gallop. Despite his braggadocio, he was apprehensive of pursuit by the Camanches; and he knew that should the Indians overtake his band upon the open plain, the latter would be overpowered by the vastly superior force of the former. He communicated his fears to his companions, and the whole band rode onward with increased speed. The Indian village faded from sight, and as yet there was no sign of pursuit by the Camanches.

Night was coming rapidly on; the sun was down, and the shades of twilight were falling over the vast plain. Jack Lewis, with his daughter seated behind him, rode to the side of Captain Carrol.

"The tables are turned, Myra," said the old hunter. "That painted lover of yours is now a prisoner himself, and he's got to hang to the first tree we come to."

Myra shuddered, as she caught the glance of the renegade's burning eyes, fixed upon her face. Love, hate, and all the terrible passions of the man's nature seemed to mingle in that look."

"Oh, why should you hang him, father?" exclaimed the girl. "Let him go, and—"

"And he'll be after us before an hour with the whole tribe of Camanches at his back," interrupted Captain Carrol. "Miss Myra, I don't like to refuse the request of a purty girl like yourself, but this here cuss has got to die. I've been wanting to get my paws on him this long while, and now that I've got him fast I shall not let him go, you may be sure."

"But it seems so much like murder," continued the girl.

"Well, I s'pose it does seem a little rough to your delicate nerves, but just think how the rascal would serve us, if he had us in his power; think how he was serving that young man yonder, and how he would have served you, if your father hadn't shot him down. No, my girl, if I were you, I wouldn't open my purty lips to plead for him."

"He deserves death, I know. He never showed mercy to others, and none should be shown him. But I wish to be spared the sight of his death."

"Don't be alarmed, young lady," said the prisoner. "You won't have the pleasure of seeing me hung just yet, I assure you. I shall live long enough to toast some of your friends, and make you my wife, my pretty one."

"You insolent dog!" thundered Captain Carrol, grasping his captive fiercely by the throat. "I told you that if you dared to open your mouth again I would strangle you, and I will, as sure as my name is Jim Carrol."

The ranger's fingers compressed the renegade's throat until the latter's face grew black.

"Release him, for Heaven's sake!" cried Myra Lewis, turning her face away from the horrible sight.

"Don't kill him, captain," interposed the old hunter, grasping the ranger's arm. "Remember we want to hang him up where all can see."

"You are right," said the ranger, releasing his hold of the prisoner's windpipe. "To kill him now would spoil the fun, but it's a hard job to listen to his threats quietly."

The medicine-man of the Camanches slowly recovered his breath, but his face remained livid with rage after the effects of his short strangulation had passed away.

"Curse you!" he muttered, "curse you, one and all! Oh, for an hour of liberty, to be revenged upon you for this! Bitterly shall you repent the day that you heaped these indignities upon the medicine-man of the Camanches. I will escape you yet—I will rejoin my tribe—I have more influence over them than the chief himself; I will set the warriors on your trail—I will hunt you night and day—I will never give up until your scalps hang in the wigwams of the Camanches!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Captain Carrol. "But talk away, my fine fellow; improve your time, for you haven't many more hours to live."

The prisoner made no reply, and the journey was continued in silence for several miles. The night was clear, and the stars twinkled brightly in the heavens. The plain stretched in every direction, a level, unbroken expanse. No sound disturbed the silence of the night, save the grinding of the horses' hoofs on the dry sand.

At last the dark outlines of a grove of timber could be discerned a short distance away.

"Do you see them trees yonder?" asked Captain Carrol, giving his prisoner a shake.

"Well, what of it?" replied the medicine-man, sullenly.

"Oh, nothing; only we're going to leave you hanging there, as a testimony to Camanches and food for buzzards. I reckon you've no objections to the arrangement?"

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 50.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A daring youth last week swam across the Niagara river at the foot of the falls.

☞ An old chap at Oil City, Pa., likely to die, has burned up sixteen thousand dollars that there may be no quarrelling over his will. He had better divided it around himself.

☞ Here is an order lately given by a young lady to her milliner: "You are to make it (the bonnet) plain, but at the same time sweet, as I sit in a conspicious place in church."

☞ An Indiana girl who was made dumb by an attack of measles, recovered her speech suddenly on being frightened while swinging.

☞ Johnny is just beginning to learn geography. He says the Poles live partly at one end of the globe and partly at the other.

☞ Mr. Venis, of Hartford, fell from a third-story window the other night, and the Eastern papers speak of it as the transit of Venis.

☞ A nephew of Greenough, the sculptor, has been arrested in Concord, N. H., for setting fire to a building. He is subject to fits of insanity, has confessed the crime, and says he did it to amuse the boys.

☞ A scared rat took refuge in the trunk of an elephant belonging to John Robinson's circus the other day, driving the animal nearly mad with terror, for he never had a rat in his trunk before, and he didn't know how to get him out. At length he went to a tank of water, sucked his proboscis full, and ejected the saucy intruder with a snort that drove him quite through the canvas.

☞ In a recent Ohio divorce case, the wife testified that her sole object in marrying was to change the name of Hophammer to that of De Lisle. She got the name and also a man who marked out domestic rules with a horsewhip.

☞ New Jersey people don't say "liar" right out, but remark: "Sir, you remind me of my lamented brother, who could pervert truth with the greatest ease." There is a great deal of refinement in New Jersey.

☞ An Ohio dog has been trained to walk home with a handsome school teacher—and he has chewed up about forty young men who have tried to secure his friendship.

☞ The editor of the Quincy (Florida) Journal after stating that there are twelve millions of fleas to the square acre in that place, calmly adds that "life is a mere dream." This is an anomalous condition of affairs, to say the least.

☞ Jealous lovers in Omaha, when their adored one is being married to another fellow, vent their passion by sneaking in the back door and licking the insides out of the wedding-cake.

☞ As two drunken butchers were together in their shop in Dubuque, Iowa, one of them bantered the other to chop his head off, at the same time laying it on the block. The other gleefully seized the cleaver and made a pass at him, intending to see "how near he could come without hitting." Unhappily, his unsteadiness of hand prevented a very satisfactory result of the experiment, as he cut off one of his ears.

☞ When a crowd of jayhawkers started a disturbance in a Texas church, the other day, the preacher raised up a shot-gun and said: "William Dello, sit down, or I'll make it painful for you." William sat down and was as quiet as a lamb.

☞ A boy in West Utica, a few nights since, awoke at once to the knowledge of a dismal optic, and the fact that he is a somnambulist. He had been in the water, swimming, nearly all the hot afternoon, and in his dreams still divided the sportive wave. Then he dreamed he wanted to dive, and so he dived. When the house got through rocking he found himself standing on his eyebrow.—*Utica Herald.*

☞ A youth of nineteen lately fled from Dodson, O., to escape the clutches of an enamored girl of twenty-two. At Rockfield, Ind., he received this telegram from a friend:—"Get up and dust. Sal's on your track close." He "dusted" his best forthwith, but she came up with him in an obscure Illinois town, and led him back home and to the altar.

☞ The Indianapolis Journal praises a locomotive engineer, who slowed in preference to "mussing his engine" with a gray-haired gentleman who was walking on the track in the city limits.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE HEIRESS OF SWEETWATER. By J. THORNTON RANDOLPH, author of "The Cabin and Parlor." Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada.

CRITIQUES AND ADDRESSES. By THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY, LL.D., F.R.S. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

FOODS. By EDWARD SMITH, M. D., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, London, &c. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

THE LAKESIDE MONTHLY. The July number contains a fine poem, entitled "An Old-Time Picture," by B. F. Taylor; "Summering at the La Porte Lakes," by Robert King, &c. Published by F. F. Browne & Co., Chicago.

THE AMERICAN EXCHANGE AND REVIEW. The July number contains the usual amount of interesting reading upon scientific and other matters. Published by the Review Publishing Company, corner Walnut and Fourth streets, Philada.

CYRILLA; OR, THE MYSTERIOUS ENGAGEMENT. By the BARONESS TAUTPHŒUS, author of "The Initials." Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada.

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BY MAX ADELER.

[Editors will please bear in mind that the following Observations by Max Adeler, in common with the other original contents of THE POST, are copyrighted. We give this notice on account of the constant "appropriation" of Max Adeler's articles, without the requisite credit being given either to the writer or the paper.—*Ed. Sat. Eve. Post.*]

—We are surprised to read in an exchange that "the corn of Mr. Redman of Lycoming county is seven feet high." We pity Redman. We cannot imagine how he gets his boot on, over such a corn as that, nor can we conceive how he contrives to walk even when he is barefooted. It is hardly likely, we should think, that Redman himself is more than six feet high, and if that is the case that solitary corn of his must tower above his head. It might be a good thing to tie an umbrella to, or he might carry a flower-pot on his foot and have a honeysuckle climbing up the corn and blossoming under his nose. Of course Redman cannot enjoy himself in wet weather. Those of us who have ordinary corns know how intense is the suffering they cause upon damp days. Now, imagine seven feet of corn in one long string, and an idea may be obtained of Redman's agony when the air is moist. He would be a very valuable man in the Signal Service Bureau. A man with a seven-foot corn, in Washington, ought to detect a storm that is raging in Kansas. We hope Redman will never have a bunion. A man who grows such monster corns would certainly develop a bunion the size of a flour barrel.

—The *Civil and Mining Engineer* undertakes to explain the phenomenon of the earthquake at Buffalo, a week or two ago. It says:—"The slip of the palæozoic rocks upon the plicated mass and eroded surface of the Laurentian mountains of Canada, fully accounts for the disturbance." This seems all the more singular, because we were sure, until reading this, that the earthquake was caused by the rhomboidal icinoclasm of the palimpsestic paralysis along the laminated solfeggio of the hypothetical hills of the Wissahickon. But we now admit that we were wrong; and hereafter when we think we feel an earthquake—when something shakes the house down, and rolls us around and knocks up the cobblestones and convulses the universe generally—we shall go up to the Laurentian mountains of Canada and see if any palæozoic rocks have slipped on their plicated mass. And if they haven't we shall come home convinced that the supposed earthquake was caused by the editor of one of the papers which steal these items, dropping his boot somewhere. We will perish rather than not have the truth.

—One of those dreadful scientific journals informs us that "all good coffee contains a proportion of at least eight-tenths of the principle known as $C_3H_5N_2O_2$." We had no idea that there was so much of the alphabet and the arithmetic in coffee, but hereafter we shall buy none that has not these figures and letters liberally mixed with the berries. It will be well for all persons to exercise equal care; and particularly to avoid coffee which has other letters and figures than these in it. Coffee for instance which contains X7G9 might be poisonous, and that which had P4 or B76 mixed with it, might form an explosive compound with the sugar and cream, and blow your mother-in-law and your helpless little children through the roof while they are at breakfast. We do not know that B is more explosive than C or N, but we suspect it is, and we would advise caution when dealing with it. The mysteries of nature are being gradually unfolded by the scientific journals, and we shall probably have some day a full description of the chemical peculiarities of the alphabet, and of the murderous tendencies of the multiplication-table.

—Colton himself told us about the accident; and if any one doubts the story, Colton is the man to be interviewed about it. He said his oldest son was out on the roof one day flying a very large kite. The boy leaned against the chimney, and while he held the cord in his hand, the stick around which the spare string was wrapped tumbled down the flue. Then he gave the cord a turn around the chimney and went down stairs for a minute. The hired girl saw the ball of twine in the fire-place and she picked it up and put it in her pocket. Just then a terrific gust of wind struck the kite, which wrenched the bricks out of the chimney, and in half a second that hired girl was snatched into the fire-place, hauled up the flue, and sent scurrying through the air two miles high. And then Colton wanted us to believe that that domestic servant actually climbed along the string, hand over hand, until she reached the kite. Then she sat down on the kite and punched holes in it, and so let it down gradually until she lighted in a cherry-tree in Montgomery county, from which she slid down and walked home. We say Colton is responsible for this story, and we know of no man whose practice and long experience better fits him to shoulder a vigorous lie, than Colton.

—We never knew more than one man who was perfectly satisfied with the weather at all times and under all circumstances. It was Chubb. No matter what the condition of the weather, Chubb was always contented and happy, and willing to affirm that the state of things at any given moment was the very best state that could be devised. In summer, when the thermometer bolted up among the nineties, Chubb would come to the front door with beads of perspiration standing out all over his red face, until his head looked like a raspberry, and would look at the sky and say, "Splendid! perfectly splendid! Noble weather for the poor and for the ice companies and the washerwomen! I never saw such magnificent weather for drying shirts. They don't shake up any such climate as this in Italy. Gimme me my umbreller, Harriet, while I sit out yer on the steps and enjoy it." In winter, when the mercury would creep down fifteen degrees below zero, and the cold was severe enough to freeze the inside of Vesuvius solid to the centre of the globe, Chubb would sit out on my fence and exclaim, "By gracious, Adeler, did you ever see such weather as this? I like an atmosphere that freezes up your very marrer. It helps the coal-trade and keeps the snakes quiet. Don't talk of summer-time to me. Gimme cold and give it to me stiff." When there was a drought, Chubb used to meet us in the street and remark, "No rain yet, I see! Magnificent, isn't it? I want my weather dry, I want it with the dampness left out. Moisture breeds fever and ague, and wets your clothes. If there's anything I despise it's to carry an umbreller. No rain for me, if you please." When it rained for a week and swamped the country, Chubb often dropped in to see us and to observe, "I dunno how you feel about this yer rain, Adeler, but it allers seems to me that the heavens never drop no blessings but when we have a long wet spell. It makes the corn jump and cleans the sewers and keeps chewing-tobacco from getting too dry. I wouldn't give a cent to live in a climate where there was no rain. Put me on the Nile and I'd die in a week. Soak me through and through to the inside of my undershirt, and I feel as if life was bright and beautiful, and sorrer nothing but nonsense." On a showery day, when the sun shone brightly at one moment and at the next the rain poured in torrents, Chubb used to stand at the window and exclaim, "Harriet, if you'd 've asked me how I liked the weather, I'd 've said, just as it is now. What I want is weather that is streaked, like a piece of fat and lean bacon, a little shine and a little rain. Mix 'em up and give us plenty of both and I'm your man." Chubb was always happy in a thunder-storm, and one day, after the lightning had knocked down two of his trees and torn his chimney to pieces, we went over to see him. He was standing by the prostrate trees, and he at once remarked, "Did you ever know of a man having such luck as that? I was goin' to chop down them two trees to-morrer, and as that chimney never draw'd well, I had concluded to have it rebuilt. And that gorgeous old storm has fixed things just the way I want 'em. Put me in a thunder-storm and let the lightnin' play around me and I'm at home. I'd rather have one storm that 'd tear the bowels out of the American continent than a dozen of yer little dribblin' waterin'-pot showers. If I can't have a rippin' and roarin' storm, I don't want none." One day Chubb was upon his roof fixing a shingle, when a tornado struck him, lifted him off, carried him a quarter of a mile and dashed him with such terrible force against a fence, that his leg was broken. As they carried him home we met him, and when we asked him how he felt, he opened his eyes languidly and said, "Immortal Moses! what a storm that was! When it does blow, it suits the senior member of the Chubb family if it blows hard. I'd give both legs if we could have a squall like that every day. I—I—" Then he fainted. We want Chubb elected President. He is the only man in the universe who don't growl at the weather, and he ought to have glory and honor.

—It is announced in one of the papers that "Don Carlos drinks chocolate every morning in his bed." This is very interesting intelligence, but how very much more startling it would be if we had learned that Don Carlos drinks his bed every morning in his chocolate? We wish he would drink a bed, or something else that would lay on his stomach and keep him quiet for awhile, so that we would not see his name so often in the papers.

—We are thinking about writing a new and original dictionary. All the old dictionaries are too much alike. They have the same tiresome repetitions of familiar words and the same stale definitions. It has become monotonous. We propose to get up a dictionary which shall have a completely new set of words, none of which ever appeared before in a work of this kind. The definitions also will be fresh, and in order to insure an absolutely correct pronunciation a man will be sent to live in the house of every purchaser for a couple of years to teach the accent and emphasis, and to borrow all the money he can for the author of the work. It is thought the dictionary will make a sensation, particularly as it is to be so arranged that when it is not wanted by the student it can be turned by a spring into a water-cooler, which will not only keep the verbs and pronouns from decaying in hot weather but will satisfy a want felt in every family.

—We have been greatly interested in a piece of new music sent to us for a notice. The title particularly is extraordinary. The music is called "My darling is in Heaven, for flute and piano." Of course we are not familiar with any of the particulars of the darling's purposes and designs, and in the absence of any definite information we may be permitted to suggest that it seems rather odd that she should have gone to Heaven for a flute and a piano, when those articles can be obtained here for a small sum in cash, and regular monthly instalments. But we are more bewildered when we come to consider the fourth verse, in which the poet speaks of his darling thus:

"And looking from the other shore,
How sweet she smiles to me!
I shall not see her any more:
The world is dark to me."

Now if he cannot see her any more, how does he know she smiles sweetly at him? and how can he see her, at any rate, when the world is dark to him? Does he go poking around with a kerosene lamp or a wax candle? And further, if she is playing the flute, how can she smile sweetly at him at the same time? These things are too marvellous for us; we cannot comprehend them. But we may offer as a kind of a general proposition the suggestion that if he was in the habit of writing such poetry and music as this before his darling left, we do not wonder that she wanted to go. A woman persecuted in such a manner might reasonably long for rest in the silent grave.

—Some men carry reverence too far. There is a man in Woodbury, eighty-seven years old, who has a pocket Bible given to him by his mother when he was a boy. He has carried that volume constantly in his pocket for seventy-four years, and he is so careful not to injure it that he has never cut the leaves or hurt them by exposing them for any length of time to the light. He keeps the book in his coat pocket and never takes it out excepting when he wants to spend one of the shinplasters which he carries in between the leaves to save himself the expense of buying a pocket book. Filial love which lasts three-fourths of a century is a holy thing.

Tale-Bearers.

Look into large families, and you will find some one false, paltry tale-bearer, who by carrying stories from one to another, shall inflame the minds and discompose the quiet of the whole family. And from families pass to towns or cities; and two or three pragmatical, intriguing, meddling fellows (men of business, some call them), by the venom of their false tongues, shall set the whole neighborhood together by the ears. Where men practise falsehood, there will be perpetual suspicions, evil surmisings, doubts and jealousies, which, by souring the minds of men, are the bane and pest of society; for society is built upon trust, and trust upon the confidence that men have in one another's integrity.

☞ The danger of standing in other men's shoes, or of wearing their cast-off habiliments, is sometimes overlooked. M. Chevallier relates, in the *Journal de Chimie Medicale*, January, 1873, that a young man of good family died in December last, because, instead of buying new gloves, he bought a pair of cleaned gloves. Either from the cleaning having left a poisoned substance inside the gloves, or from some venomous insect lodged there, he presently felt a sharp pain in an abrasion which he had on the thumb. He bore it for awhile, but at the end of half an hour he was obliged to tear the gloves off. His hand was swollen, and the spot was black. Gangrene followed and death.

MODEST ASSURANCE.

LADY OF THE HOUSE.—"Well, Millicent, how do you like your new horse, 'Roland?'"

MILLICENT.—"Oh, immensely! But he wants a firm hand, you know. He'd very soon run away with me, if I gave him a chance; wouldn't he, Robert?"

ROBERT (a kind of cousin to Millicent).—"Run away with you, if you gave him a chance? By George, if I can judge of 'Roland's' feelings by my own, *I should just think he would!*"

RUTH'S TEMPTATION.

BY MARGARET AUDLEY DOUGLASS.

Ruth Morton stood at her cottage-door, just as the sun dipped into the sea. It was a tiny frame cottage, painted brown, and before it a few flowers were trying their best to grow and beautify the poor place—for everything spoke of poverty, though scrupulously clean and neat. Ruth's eyes had wandered seaward, and as the fresh wind dashed against her cheek, her lips parted, and the cold, stern look her face wore when she first left the cottage, gave place to one of quiet pleasure. She watched the fishing-boats come in, and the tide creep slowly up the sands, and then, a querulous voice from within called her name.

Pushing open the door she stepped into a scantily-furnished room, having the appearance of parlor and kitchen combined. In one corner near the fireplace, sat a creature—whether girl or woman, at first sight, it was impossible to decide—rocking her body to and fro, and whining peevishly. Her low forehead was shaded by short, stiff hair, and from under her heavy brows gleamed a pair of eyes, destitute of all expression, save a kind of foolish cunning. The face was almost animal, robbed of all intellect, all reason.

This creature was Mattie, Ruth Morton's sister, and only relative.

"What do you want, Mattie?" she asked, in a voice intensely quiet.

"Want?" whined the idiot—"make them go! It's only me—*me!* They're looking at me—I know it." The whining ended in a kind of screech, and she looked over her shoulder with a shudder. Ruth made no answer; there was none to make; the poor idiot in the corner always had some complaint to make, some imaginary terror hanging over her head. After the evening meal was over, Ruth seated herself near the sputtering tallow candle, and presently the tapping of her needle on the thimble, and Mattie's meaningless stream of words, were the only sounds that broke the stillness. The flickering light fell full on Ruth Morton's face, bringing it out in strong relief against the bare walls. It was a strong face, in the fullest sense of the word; there was strength in the firm mouth, and in the broad white brow; but there was unrest, too, and the brown eyes rarely showed themselves fully, but were always half-veiled beneath the full white eyelids. Judging from her face, one would have said, if a duty were ever placed before Ruth Morton, the performance of which would strip her life of everything worth living for, she would do that duty to its uttermost limit. Her face was cold, but it was only the reflection of her life. She was barely twenty at this time; but I think she never knew more of girlhood than its name.

She and Mattie were the only children of a Captain Morton, who had come to Scone some sixteen years before. That he was a widower, and his eldest girl an idiot, were the only facts the villagers knew. Of surmises there was no lack, for the captain was without doubt a gentleman, as much so as General Hovendon, the great man of the town—even the fishermen discovered that—but he was poor, and had lived in the little brown cottage until his death, five years before.

And Ruth—hers was a strange life! Her father never evinced the least affection for her—what heart he had was given to Mattie, and Ruth learned her lesson at the age when other children think that life is made up of dolls and sugar-plums—she learned that her portion in life was to devote herself to Mattie, to be her slave.

She accepted her lot, not submissively, nor from love for her sister, but with the idea that it was her duty. And that duty she performed, if not lovingly, at least to the very letter.

Then came her father's death, and to the last his care was all for Mattie; not content with her promise, he had made her swear to devote her life to her sister—never to marry. And she had done so. They were poor. Mattie was like a dead weight, only at times she could be left alone while Ruth sewed for families in the town; at others she dared not leave her, and so many a day's work was lost, and the money that would have come from them lost also.

Early the next morning Ruth might have been seen walking slowly toward the town. She had left Mattie under the care of a neighbor while she went to sew upon the *trousseau* of General Hovendon's daughter. The fishermen and their wives, whose huts she passed on her way, stood respectfully aside to let her pass, but no greeting passed between them, for they stood somewhat in awe of the pale, quiet woman who walked always alone and with downcast eyes.

Upon the edge of the town she paused, and turning for one last look at the sunlit waves found herself face to face with a gentleman, who lifted his hat as he said:

"Good-morning, Miss Ruth; may I walk with you?"

Ruth's great brown eyes had met his with a troubled look, and as their curling lashes fell over them, she began:

"Mr. Hovendon—"

"No, there isn't the slightest use in forbidding me—you should know that by this time, Miss Ruth. Let me carry your bundle. Are you going to Mary to-day?" he said, interrupting her merrily.

"Yes, your sister has hired me for the whole day. Good-morning," she said distinctly, and as though she expected him to pass on.

He contracted his forehead, saying half-angrily, half-imploringly:

"There, we will not talk of that. Let us forget—"

"That you are Arthur Hovendon and I a seamstress?" she questioned, with a short, bitter laugh.

"There! Miss Ruth, why will you misconstrue? You know I consider you my equal."

"I appreciate your condescension in so doing," she said shortly.

After that they walked on in silence.

As they passed a little whitewashed cottage Ruth left her companion's side, and pushing open the gate, vanished through the door. Arthur Hovendon could see her through the open window bend down to a little girl who was lying on a couch, and taking both her thin hands, kiss them and the white face passionately.

The girl in there by the little cripple was no longer Ruth, or rather she was a shadow of what Ruth might have been, or *was* before her life had become such a mockery of living. The Ruth that the world knew had a pale, cold face: but the Ruth beyond the window had smiling lips, a flush of color and soft brown eyes filled with love and tears.

Arthur had witnessed this scene almost a score of times before; but to-day his own eyes moistened and his handsome face grew very sympathetic and tender.

After a few minutes Ruth returned, her face still flushed and softened; she started a little when she saw him still waiting, but resumed her walk without speaking.

"Poor little Katie is very fond of you. I do not wonder, you seem devoted to her," he said, as though thinking aloud.

"Yes, she does love me—she is the only person who ever did," Ruth said softly.

Mr. Hovendon's face changed suddenly, and his lips parted as though to speak, but he was silent; after a time he said softly,

"Miss Ruth, in the old days before I played spy and saw you by that little cripple's couch, I used to think you were all ice, or rather, a kind of sphynx, who did not even deign to ask riddles, and whose lips could only speak words colder than icicles!"

The old watchful look came back to her face, as she said, "I am neither. It is not worth Mr. Hovendon's while to speculate about me. Will you leave me, sir?"

He stopped, saying abruptly, "Ruth Morton, will you listen to me for a few minutes?"

"No!" Her voice was quick and shrill. "No! Never join me again. Go!" She spoke hurriedly, never raising her head.

"Ruth!"—but she quickened her pace, and after a second's indecision he fell back with a pained look.

Poor Ruth! her path on earth was surely narrow and stony enough to lead, in the end, to the most perfect delights of Elysium—if one believes in the doctrine of recompense! Her life was barren and dreary enough before, but, poor girl, it would have been better had she died before she gave all her strong, passionate heart to Arthur Hovendon. She knew her duty, and never dreamed of thrusting it aside; but love was very sweet and strange, and she was only a woman; she blinded herself wilfully, but that morning she felt the whole grim truth; it was hard, but she looked her trouble in the face and remembered a vow made by a death-bed.

And Arthur—well, he was a man and in love; he had loved Ruth for more than a year—a lover's eternity—and had been silent; now he determined to speak; but Ruth dared not meet him, and watch as he might, he could not exchange even a word with her for several weeks.

Fortune at last favored him. One evening he met her just as she was returning from work. Ruth gave him one quick glance and saw that he looked handsome, but very pale and anxious; she bowed slightly and tried to pass on without speaking, for seeing his face her courage failed, but he stood before her in the path, saying:

"Ruth, you *must* hear me!—you cannot put me off longer; sometimes I have thought that you liked me—my darling, I love you; let me take you from this desolate place and make you my wife, Ruth." He held out both hands toward her, but, though her fair face had quivered at the sound of his pleading voice, when he ended, it was, as usual, stern and passionless.

"Ruth, look at me—tell me that you will be my wife?"

There was a little pause, then she said one word—"No."

"Ruth"—speaking he caught her hand, loving, passionate words fell from his lips; when he paused, Ruth said—

"I cannot." That was all, but there was a quiver of pain in the low voice. Arthur Hovendon's voice again began its prayer, but she kept her face turned from him.

"Ruth, will you try to love me—just a little?"

"*Try* to love you!" she echoed, and her face was turned to his—"try to love you."

A sudden change came over his handsome face.

"Then you love me—Ruth—my darling!" he held out his hands, but she was motionless.

Ah! if she could have died then standing out there under the gray sky, with the dash of the waves against the shore for a dirge. Out of the open window came the sound of Mattie's shrill voice, and with the sound strength came back to her.

Again Arthur Hovendon asked—

"Ruth, what does this mean? For God's sake, speak!"

She was only a woman—young and very tired, and on one side there was offered her love and happiness, on the other, long dreary years of sacrifice. It seemed so easy to say *yes*—but there was a vow made—stay! the dead are powerless, why should she not be happy? one word would make her so; should she say it?

"Ruth—do you love me?"

She raised her eyes full to his and said deliberately—

"*No*, Arthur Hovendon."

There is nothing more to be told. Ruth Morton had done what she believed to be her duty, and having done so much she did not turn back. She and Mattie went on in the same old way; it was a ghastly, dreary existence, but was there an alternative?

Well! it is not a pleasant story, but pitifully common! There is not even a moral; but if truth is a recommendation, Ruth Morton's story can lay claim to it—for it is written down here as it was *lived*.

Accident in the Hartz Mountains.

BRAVERY OF AN AMERICAN.

The Pall Mall Gazette says: "An accident occurred the other day upon the Hartz Mountains, the circumstances of which as reported are highly honorable to a young American concerned. This gentleman, Mr. Tatham, formed one of a party of student excursionists from the Prussian School of Mines, who had gone up to the spot well known as the Witches' Ball-room, the same that Goethe introduces with such great effect into his immortal drama. It proved nearly dark when they reached the chasm and looked down it. Unhappily one of the party, a German named Krüwel, somehow lost his footing, and was precipitated down the precipice, at the edge of which his companions were standing, into the depth below, where all sight of him was lost.

"His comrades dispersed in search of aid, but it proved too late to do anything effectual before night completely closed, and their dismay was added to greatly when they missed Mr. Tatham, who was supposed to have perished by a vain attempt to rescue Krüwel. At dawn the other students were on the spot with plenty of aid—and to their surprise, saw the gleam of a small fire far below in the chasm into which their comrade had fallen. It turned out that Mr. Tatham had managed to scramble down after the fallen man by the aid of bushes and rocks, and finding the object of his search, though terribly bruised, still alive and partly sensible, had tended him through the night, covering him with his own outer clothes, and keeping up a fire of sticks both against the cold and as a signal for aid from above. Although the height down which Herr Krüwel fell, or, more properly, rolled, is reported to be over two hundred feet, he had broken no limb, and was making a good recovery at last accounts, thanks to Mr. Tatham."

How the Ladies of Pompeii Dressed.

The fair Pompeiian laved her body in warm, scented baths of asses' or goats' milk, lying in luxuriousness for an hour; nay, an hour was the merest point of time with her when so employed; often a bath occupied the entire morning. In consequence, her flesh was as delicately-tinted a white as the inner leaf of a newly opened tea rose, of satin-like texture, as the petals of a calla lily. Venus Aphrodite, coming in all her lovely perfectness from the sea-foam, was her essential type. These same Pompeiian beauties, by the way, dressed, walked, talked and strove to be enchanting after the Greek styles as thoroughly as any of our own fair ones strive, to-day, to emulate the seductive grace of the Parisienne. Next to the skin, the belles of that buried age, and their Greek models also, wore a garment of cambric; then a band called strophium, which supported the bosom without confining it, since nothing would have been considered more shocking than straightening up the figure in corsets, binding it up in whalebone splints!—the softly natural curves, the undulating swell, being thought the true line of beauty in all sorts of artistic forms, in life as well as stone.

The maker of the strophium was as much prized as the corset-maker in our day. Over this band was always worn a jacket, with sleeves, made of the finest wool. Then came the graceful tunics, the length of which was evidence of the character of the dame it adorned. This form of dress was equally the custom among the Roman fairs as among the Greek and Pompeiian. A mantle!—(the artistic grace in the arrangement of which the most celebrated French modiste of to-day cannot equal,) the manner of wearing which, under the right breast, over the left, and thrown across the shoulder, was as unvarying as the color, which was always white, and which one of their poets called "woven wind-clouds"—was the invariable dress for walking.

Why Not Successful.

The young clerk marries and takes a house, which he proceeds to furnish twice as expensively as he can afford, and then his wife, instead of striving to help him earn a livelihood, by doing her own work, must have a hired servant to help her spend his limited earnings. Ten years afterward you will find him struggling on under a double load of debts and children, wondering why the luck was always against him, while his friends regret his unhappy destitution of financial ability. Had they from the first been frank and honest, he need not have been so unlucky. The world is full of people who can't imagine why they don't prosper like their neighbors, when the real obstacle is not in banks or tariffs, in bad public policy or hard times, but in their own extravagance and heedless ostentation.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

We cannot undertake to answer questions relating to the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts in this column.

YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, (Minnesota,) asks: "1st. Can you give me a recipe for making a good cup of clear coffee? 2d. Are tea and coffee injurious to the complexion if they are not used to excess? 3d. Who should cut the bride's cake at a wedding? 4th. Can you give me a vague description of the manner in which a paper wedding is conducted? 5th. Do you think — injurious to the complexion? My sister will persist in using it, and her complexion is pretty enough without the aid of cosmetics. 6th. What do you think of my writing and spelling?" 1st. The following is said to be a good method: Use one tablespoonful of ground coffee to each person. Mix with the white of an egg in cold water. Pour in boiling water and boil briskly for five minutes. Dash half a cupful of cold water into the boiling water, and set off for three minutes. The coffee will come off clear as amber. 2d. They are said to be by some physicians. It is probable, however, that if used in moderation, no injury will result. 3d. The bride usually cuts the first piece. 4th. There is no special ceremony. It is an ordinary party, in which the guests bring presents made of paper. 5th. We would not like to trust any cosmetic on a fine complexion. It is sure to do more harm than good. 6th. Your spelling is correct, your writing passable.

LOUISE, (Ohio,) asks: "1st. Will you please tell me the best method of doing up manuscripts to be sent either by post or express? Should they be folded (if only containing two or three sheets) or rolled? Should a large MS., say a sufficient number of pages to make a book, be enclosed in a wrapper in the same manner that newspapers are sent by mail? Should the separate pages be fastened together, and if so, how? Should the letter to the editor or publisher be enclosed in the package with the MS., or should it be sent separately? 2d. Is it customary for editors to pay nothing for poetry?" 1st. Manuscripts of a few pages only had better be folded and sent in an ordinary envelope. A long manuscript, if written on note paper, should be covered with a wrapper without folding or rolling. If on foolscap, it should be folded as little as possible. If intended for a newspaper, the package should be closed at both ends, and the letter to the publisher may be enclosed, as full letter postage must be paid. If to a book publisher, one end should be left open, as it can be sent for newspaper postage. In this case send the letter separately. 2d. Poetry is not usually paid for, except in the case of writers of established reputation.

P. A. H., (Dansville, Pa.,) asks: "1st. Who was the author of the story entitled 'The Quaker Partisans,' published in THE POST in 1865? 2d. Did Charles Dickens have any children, and are any of them living? 3d. Do you know where Edward S. Ellis lives? 4th. Can you tell me who wrote the following lines and the name of the poem?

'The skies they were ashen and sober,
The leaves they were crisped and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere,
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year.
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid-region of Weir.
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.'

5th. I also ask this question, do horse-hairs by lying in water ever turn into snakes? Is such a thing possible? I have often heard people talk about horse-hair snakes, but I never believed it." 1st. Mr. E. H. Williamson, of this city. 2d. He left several children. One of his sons is a writer and the editor of Household Words. 3d. In Trenton, N. J. 4th. Edgar A. Poe. It is the first verse of the poem called Ulalume. 5th. Certainly not. Among the many absurd notions which people entertain there is none can surpass this in point of absurdity. Yet we have heard persons gravely declare that they have watched this metamorphosis. It would be about as reasonable to suppose that a hair could turn into a man, under the same circumstances. The most devoted believers in spontaneous generation look for nothing more complicated than a microscopic animalcule in their preparations. There is a small animal, we believe, which resembles a horse-hair.

DAISY, (Kentucky,) asks: "Will you please tell me what you will print or engrave a case of visiting cards for, in the latest style?" For one dollar; but it is too inconvenient to send samples, as is generally requested. You must depend upon our judgment.

JUNIUS, (Texas,) writes: "As you take, or seem to take, especial delight in catering to the intellectual appetites of these our great people of America, please answer the subjoined interrogatories, and thereby impart information 'that a fellow cannot, otherwise, find out.' 1st. Why does the sun, just before setting, appear larger than at other times? 2d. Who is the author of

'How happy could I be with either
Were 'tother dear charmer away?'

3d. What is the proper pronunciation of Blessed in the sentence, 'Blessed are the pure in heart?' 4th. Where can I purchase some second-hand law books? In the fires of Chicago and Boston were there not stores burned and books injured, which I could buy cheap? 5th. What college can I attend cheapest? 6th. Who was Dante? 7th. Where is the Mason and Dixon's line? 8th. What of my chirography?" 1st. The sun, when near the horizon, comes into comparison with terrestrial objects, and we are able to gain a more accurate idea of its real dimensions than when it stands alone in mid-sky, with nothing with which to compare it. Refraction also distorts its shape, making it appear shorter vertically. 2d. The poet, John Gay. The lines occur in the "Beggars' Opera." 3d. The word is pronounced both in one and two syllables. In grave sentences, like that given, it is customary to pronounce it in two syllables. If in one syllable it is usually spelt Blest. 4th. There may be such collections of injured books. You could probably, by addressing parties in those cities, obtain the desired information. 5th. That is a question the answer to which depends largely on your objects in entering college. Our advice is that you write to the different colleges, requesting them to send you circulars and such other information as you may desire. 6th. He was a celebrated Italian poet, born in Florence in 1265. His principal work, called, in English, the Divine Comedy, is an imaginary description of the future life, in which he takes the opportunity of describing his enemies as suffering torments in the "Inferno." It is a work of the highest epic merit. 7th. It is the boundary line between the States of Pennsylvania and Maryland. It was surveyed in the years 1763-67, to settle the disputed boundary between the possessions of the Lords Baltimore and of the Penn family. 8th. It is rather good.

S. H. W., (Zion, Md.,) writes: "Seeing with what willingness you answer your many correspondents, I am going to trespass on your patience, by asking you the following simple questions. 1st. Will you please send me the recipe for making jelly cake? 2d. Do you know of any remedy for the destruction of little red ants? It is needless to ask the fashionable question of 'what of my writing for a girl of 12?' for it is what I style 'awful.' What of my composition? Is it correct?" 1st. Beat three eggs and two cups of sugar together. Add one cup of milk and one-half cup of butter. Also one-half teaspoonful of soda and one of cream of tartar, sifted in three and a half cups of flour. Bake in tin plates. Cover with jelly, making five or six layers. 2d. Sprinkle Scotch snuff about their haunts. 3d. Yes, except that "roundies" are not used for the purpose of destruction.

M. A. I., (Schuil City, Mo.), writes: "Will you please answer a few questions for me, because I am in trouble, and know that you are very kind to help people out of trouble. 1st. I am acquainted with a young lady, and have always tried to treat her with respect, and as a friend, for I wish to be friendly with all persons that are worthy. But she told a friend of mine the other day that she thought I was green, and she has treated me several times as if she thought I was very green. Now, I do not care for being called green, for I do not pretend to be as wise as Solomon. When she slighted me I never let on to take notice of it, thinking it best to treat such slights with silent contempt. Now, would you advise me to pursue the course that I have, or let her know that I do take notice of these slights? I think she calls me green because I choose to remain silent rather than to take hand in conversations that you might call foolish and nonsensical. 2d. What books should a young man read to improve himself? Could you recommend some good book that gives a history of the horse and his diseases? 3d. I have been always ambitious to have a good education, and have got what education I have by studying hard after work hours. Should I keep on studying and try to save money to go to college, or marry and settle down?" 1st. The course you have taken is probably the best you could pursue. To meet ridicule with anger usually has the effect of increasing the ridicule. If she has no other reason for considering you green than the one you have given, her opinion need not affect your peace of mind. Other people will be apt to judge for themselves, from your deportment, and not take you at her estimate. In any case greenness is not a crime, and is a condition that may be cured. Our advice is not to let any one see that you are sensitive to their ridicule, and that you live down by silence all such depreciation. 2d. There are legions of books that would be useful. Works of history, science, travel, biography, romance, and a dozen other subjects, may be chosen, according to your tastes and needs. Try "Youatt on the Horse." 3d. You should keep on studying, and try to be properly economical. You can best settle what to do when you are prepared to take any decided course.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]